DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 323 544 CS 212 498

AUTHOR Cathcart, Gayal
TITLE Promoting Literacy Development of First Graders through the Implementation of a Process Writing Program.
PUB DATE 90
NOTE 173p.; Ed.D. Practicum, Nova University. Some of the material in the appendixes may not reproduce clearly.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Grade 1; Language Acquisition; *Learning Activities; Learning Centers (Classroom); Learning Motivation; Parent Participation; Primary Education; Reading Writing Relationship; Writing Improvement; *Writing Instruction; *Writing Laboratories; *Writing Processes
IDENTIFIERS *Childrens Writing; Emergent Literacy; *Process Approach (Writing); Writing Development

ABSTRACT

A practicum was designed to change the traditional methods of writing instruction which had not been effective in meeting the developmental needs of first-grade children. Twenty-two teachers responded to two surveys to provide problem documentation data. Four goals and instructional plans were selected to address the problem. The first goal, of placing emphasis on content and on stimulating the imagination rather than on the mechanics of writing was met through the establishment of writing centers. The second goal, of providing children with extended writing opportunities using a variety of writing forms and audiences was met through a home writing plan. The third goal, of giving children opportunities to read and display their stories was met through a writing exchange program; and the final goal, of giving students unstructured time to write on subjects of their own selection was met through changes in classroom management. Strategies included giving a needs assessment survey, determining specific areas of concern to be addressed, involving parents, giving process writing inservice to teachers, organizing and maintaining writing productions, and evaluating the program. Analysis of the data showed school-wide interest in process writing as an alternative to traditional writing instruction. Students gained the image of being capable writers through meaningful writing experiences and ownership of their literacy efforts. (Two tables of data are included and 63 references are attached. Appendixes include writing surveys, sample childhood writing, letters and permission slips to parents, news clips, mid-evaluation of programs, and children's airplane stories and illustrations.) (Author/MG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED323544

Promoting Literacy Development of First Graders Through The Implementation Of A Process Writing Program

by

Gayal Cathcart

Cluster 27

A Practicum II Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1990

CS212498

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Gayal N. Cathcart

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

Verifier: Mary Ann Sanders Mary Ann Sanders
Teacher, North Wauchula Elem.
Wauchula, Florida 33873

August 15, 1990

This practicum report was submitted by Gayal N. Cathcart under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

Aug. 31, 1990
Date of Final Approval

Wm. W. Anderson
Dr. William Anderson,
Adviser

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This practicum is dedicated to our elementary school art teacher, Sue Harvey, whose gentle nudges have encouraged the Spirit of Creativity to be known through art and writing for many years. It is also dedicated to the first grade authors, children who discovered the power of words.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

TABLE OF CONTENTS..... iii

LIST OF TABLES..... v

ABSTRACT..... vi

Chapter

I INTRODUCTION..... 1

Description of Work Setting and Community..... 1
Writer's Work Setting and Role..... 3

II STUDY OF THE PROBLEM..... 8

Problem Description..... 8
Problem Documentation..... 9
Causative Analysis..... 12
Relationship of the Problem to the Literature..... 13

III ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS..... 30

IV SOLUTION STRATEGY..... 38

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions... 38
Description of Selected Solution..... 41
Report of Action Taken..... 50

V RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS... 84

Results..... 84
Conclusions..... 104
Recommendations..... 106
Dissemination..... 107

REFERENCES..... 108

Appendices..... 113

A. WRITING SURVEY FOR GRADES K-2..... 114

B. WRITING SURVEY FOR GRADES K-2, INDIVIDUAL VIEWS AND CLASSROOM PRACTICES..... 116

C. "WRITING" BY A TWO YEAR OLD..... 118

D. EARLY CHILDHOOD WRITING 1990..... 120

E. HOME WRITING PROJECT LETTER TO PARENTS..... 122

F. HOME WRITING PROJECT PERMISSION FORM..... 124

G. FIRST GRADE LETTER TO BUS DRIVER..... 126

H. "HOLIDAY WRITERS" NEWS CLIP..... 128

I. WRITING DISPLAY ON STAGE, P.T.O. SCIENCE FAIR. 130

J. PEN PALS NEWS CLIP..... 132

K. STORY CHAIN NEWS CLIP..... 134

L. "ART WORKS '89" NEWS CLIP..... 136

M. WRITING/DRAWING LAB LETTER TO PARENTS..... 138

N. WRITING/DRAWING LAB PERMISSION FORM..... 140

O. MID EVALUATION OF WRITING CENTERS-INSERVICE... 142

P. MID EVALUATION OF WRITING CENTERS..... 144

Q. EVALUATION OF WRITER'S EXCHANGE AND CLASSROOM WRITING CENTERS..... 146

R. MID EVALUATION OF HOME WRITING PROGRAM..... 148

S. EVALUATION OF HOME WRITING PROGRAM..... 150

T. MID EVALUATION OF WRITER'S EXCHANGE PROGRAM... 152

U. WRITING EXCHANGE PICTURES..... 154

V. "PLANE" STORIES AND ILLUSTRATIONS..... 156

W. "PLANE" STORIES AND ILLUSTRATIONS-RISK TAKERS..... 158

X. KINDERGARTEN PREWRITING..... 160

Y. FIRST GRADE ILLUSTRATIONS..... 162

Z. FIRST GRADE WRITING..... 164

LIST OF TABLES

Table | Page

Number of Children, Stories, and Variety of Writing.....92

"Plane" Stories Risk-Takers K-2.....98

ABSTRACT

Promoting Literacy Development of First Graders Through the Implementation of a Process Writing Program. Cathcart, Gayal N., 1990: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood.
Descriptors: Writing Curriculum/Non Traditional Education/ Grade One Writing Projects/programs/Motivation/Writing Evaluation/Grammar/Language Development/Whole Language Instruction/Handwriting/Children's Literature/Fairy Tales/ School Environment/Self-Esteem/Standard Spelling Instruction/Writing Programs/Literacy Development/Culture/ Collaborative Learning/Early Intervention/Adult Modeling/ Intuition/Mythology/Writing Grants/Early Childhood Education

This practicum was designed to change traditional methods of writing instruction which had not been effective in meeting the developmental needs of first grade children. Four goals were selected to address this problem. The first goal of changing the character of first grade writing instruction so that emphasis was properly placed upon content and stimulating the imagination rather than on the mechanics of writing was met through the establishment of writing centers in first grade classrooms. The second goal of providing children with extended writing opportunities using a variety of writing forms and audiences was met through a home writing plan. The third goal of giving children opportunities to read and display their stories was met through a writing exchange program. The last goal of giving students unstructured time to write on subjects of their own selection was met through changes in classroom management.

The practicum promoted literacy development by changing the traditional character of writing instruction. Strategies included giving a needs assessment survey, determining specific areas of concern to be addressed, involving parents, giving process writing inservice to teachers, organizing and maintaining writing productions, and evaluating the program.

The results of the practicum were positive. Analysis of data showed school wide interest in process writing as an alternative to traditional writing instruction. Students gained the image of being capable writers through meaningful writing experiences and ownership of their literacy efforts. A Writing/Drawing lab was added to the program in order for artistically talented children to write and draw.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The county in which this proposal was implemented is located in the center of one of the fastest growing states in the nation. The topography and climate of this complex state caused it to develop unlike that of any other area. The central location of the rural community made surrounding world famous attractions, educational facilities, and museums of science and space accessible to local residents. The farming community was provided with sources and entertainment and learning which would otherwise have not been attainable.

The economic climate revolved around an agricultural base which created a changing population of migrant workers. The availability of work picking fruit and harvesting crops attracted seasonal laborers to the 630 square miles of rich soil. The county was one of the country's prime agricultural centers and has been recognized for high-quality citrus, prize-winning livestock, and abundant produce. The land also contained a considerable supply of phosphate. The phosphate industry played an important

economic role through the employment of residents in the mining and distribution of this product.

The social climate reflected attempts by residents to preserve tradition, yet adapt to a changing environment. The three major towns in the county are within a ten-mile radius and participated in community events collectively. A park on the river served as the location of an 18-year old event which resembled a fair and involved the county so completely that one school day a year was designated as a holiday in order for children to attend. An estimated 300,000 visitors shopped in over 400 flea market booths while school, church, and non-profit organizations provided information, food, and entertainment. People from all over the nation brought new ideas to the county population of only 22,000.

The park provided a wildlife sanctuary, historic museum, playground, boat ramp, hiking trail, and camping facilities. Wild animals and reptiles have been customarily spotted by sightseers while on canoe trips down the river.

An agro-civic center featured a 1500 seat auditorium which was used for programs, meetings, dinners, and fund raising endeavors. A large arena adjacent to the civic center was the location of the county fair. Truck pulls, mud slings, and cattle auctions have been favorite attractions. Experiences at the civic center were frequently woven into classroom drawing and writing papers.

The county was known for the creative productions of the residents. The talents of both artists and writers have received recognition through art shows, state exhibits, and the news media. Several professional artists as well as a much publicized sculptor live here. Publications about the county's rich historic character were made available to children through school libraries as a source of cultural enrichment for the younger generation.

The educational atmosphere of this rural area exemplified combined efforts of school and community to provide quality education for the children. All elementary schools in the county were accredited. The state offered a wide variety of postsecondary educational opportunities including a well diversified State University System, a Community College System, and numerous private institutions of learning. Through these educational facilities, local residents in the urban area participated in educational opportunities not available within the county.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The work setting was a K-2 elementary school located on 13 acres just outside the city limits of the county's largest town. The modern brick building was 12 years old and housed rooms for art, music, speech, media, exceptional student education, reading labs, a cafeteria, and an administrative office. The school structure provided for an educational program based on an open concept, but

portable walls remained permanently placed in the 32 self-contained classrooms.

A central area in each pod contained four classrooms and was adapted to special purposes of individual teachers and used for group projects. The cafeteria provided the largest capacity and was the site of school programs and plays. The library was well located in the middle of the school and reflected the life of the community in addition to that of the school. The art room was a large, well equipped area which offered elementary children rewarding art experiences throughout the year.

The school grounds consisted of trees and grassy areas which proved idea for class picnics, games, and holiday activities. In addition, the outdoor space was used during the year for physical education, school events, and classroom projects. A section of the playground was equipped with slides, swings, and a hardtop area for exercise and basketball. Santa flew in by helicopter and landed on the bus loading zone in December. The students saw a hot air balloon lift from the playground this year with one of the elementary children on board. The grounds have been the location of a circus and a petting zoo as well as civic contests. The large outside space and pleasant climate allowed participation in a variety of events throughout the year.

Personnel included a principal, 10 kindergarten

teachers, 11 first grade teachers, 10 second grade teachers, a primary specialist, media specialist, art teacher, music teacher, an adaptive physical education instructor, counselor, a Chapter I resource teacher, a speech pathologist, and a school psychologist. Additional employees included 19 classroom assistants, 4 secretaries and clerks, 5 custodians, and 8 lunchroom workers.

The school building had a capacity for 750 students with an enrollment of 625 at the time of proposal implementation. A large percentage of the children were migrant which caused the school population to change throughout the year. The ethnic groups within the school consisted of 64% white, 23% Hispanic, and 13% black. The school tended to have older children because of the migrant population.

The writer's professional responsibilities included instructing first grade children in reading, math, social studies, spelling, and handwriting. Subjects were taught using a county curriculum guide and teacher manual for the areas of study. She was responsible for teaching lessons with consideration for the developmental readiness of the children and found it necessary to offer multiple ways of learning to the diversified group. Moreover, she organized, planned, and carried out instructional procedures in conjunction with scheduled activities such as music, art, physical education, library, and school functions.

In addition, she had conferences with the principal, counselor, teachers, school support system personnel, and parents concerning the progress of students. She also considered it important to maintain a classroom environment which insured physical safety for the children and offered an atmosphere conducive to learning.

Handwriting was the responsibility of the first grade teacher. Instructional strategies consisted of teaching letter formation and copying words and sentences. Handwriting, however, was not process writing. The writer wanted to consider the whole child in the teaching of writing and to change the existing method of instruction if the needs of children were not being met.

The writer agreed with Cole (1987) that traditional accountability methods such as standardized tests only made people accountable for the development of low levels of knowledge and skill. She saw the challenge of being accountable for higher-order thinking skills in an effort to include inquiry, more sophisticated writing skills, and thinking skills in the curriculum. Change was thought to be essential in order to restore balance to a system that placed overemphasis on the basics.

Accordingly, she felt comfortable in challenging methods of teaching and in questioning current definitions used in education today. The writer had implemented a program for artistically talented first grade children

in 1989. The success of the art program led her to realize there is indeed a "new spirit finding expression as the yearning grows to give children a firm hold on the eternities of the human soul" (Robertson, 1982, p. xlx). The writer believed the new era must demonstrate the development and release of creativity in the classroom.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

This state's law requires children attend school 180 days per school year. During each of these days, first grade teachers instructed in subject areas following county curriculum guides and teacher manuals. The intensity and variety of the curriculum occupied teachers with responsibilities of lesson preparation, class instruction, and evaluations.

Although first grade children received mandatory instruction in handwriting skills, there were no provisions in the elementary curriculum guide for process writing. Children were instructed in proper formation of letters and numerals. Skills were reinforced through copying words or sentences. A writing workbook served to provide examples and offer exercises in the practice of handwriting procedures.

The problem involved the inadequacy of the present writing program to stimulate the imagination. Many first grade children were not presented with opportunities for self-expression in writing. Preoccupation with handwriting

methods along with insufficient information about the developmental capabilities and needs of first grade children prevented meaningful writing experiences.

The ideal situation would have been for children to have teachers with a clear understanding of the writing process and the critical role it played in children's literacy development. As models, teachers would have demonstrated the value of writing and encouraged children to claim authorship of what they wrote. In addition, time would have been allowed for children to write about topics of their own choosing and the students would have been motivated to write through ownership and control of their own craft. Process writing would have been integrated with other topic areas rather than being taught as an isolated subject. In conclusion, the ideal situation would have been one in which children felt good about their literacy efforts and emerged as capable young writers.

Briefly stated, the problem was traditional methods of writing instruction were not effective in meeting the developmental needs of first grade children.

Problem Documentation

Documentation through interviews and two writing surveys (Appendices A and B) provided evidence to support the existence of the problem.

Interviews with the curriculum director and seven parents of first grade students revealed the need for young

children to have experiences in writing other than the experiences the present writing program provided. The curriculum director and randomly selected parents were asked whether or not they were satisfied with the current writing program.

The curriculum director stated dissatisfaction with the program because it had not provided opportunities in writing which fostered the development of the imagination, but added that the county did not have a writing curriculum which included grades K-2 at this time. He stated the county had implemented a developmental writing program for grades four and up, but writing should begin much sooner.

Parents expressed dissatisfaction with the structured traditional handwriting program because it had not taken advantage of the motivation and creativity displayed in writing at home. According to parents, their children frequently wrote notes, made up stories, and shared writing at home. In addition, these same children expressed disappointment because there were few opportunities to have fun with writing at school.

Two writing surveys given to 31 teachers in grades K-2 provided data of problem documentation. The first survey (Appendix A) was given in order to gain a broad view of how teachers in this school valued and understood writing. The second survey (Appendix B) asked teachers

to check areas they considered most likely to interfere with process writing in the classroom. Seven kindergarten teachers, ten first grade teachers, and five second grade teachers responded to the survey for a total of 22 participants.

Seventeen of the 22 respondents said the need to focus on required subjects left little time for consistent instruction in process writing. This finding was significant in that it indicated teachers did not see the value of writing as a tool for learning other required subjects. Instead, teachers viewed process writing as a "subject area" instead of a vital learning experience which could touch all areas of the curriculum.

Additionally important, fifteen teachers indicated the need for a writing curriculum for their age level. This need was again evidenced by the voluntary written request of seven teachers who wanted to be provided with methods for using process writing in their rooms. Similarly, three teachers asked for information on using writing and drawing in conjunction with other areas of study to improve writing skills.

Eight teachers in K-1 and one second grade teacher considered children for their grade level as not being developmentally ready to receive instruction in process writing. An additional nine teachers expressed teacher training had not prepared them to include process writing

in their teaching strategy. Thirteen teachers did not see knowledge of developmental needs or teacher preparation in teaching writing as being factors to interfere with writing content instruction. Large class size or inconsistent enrollment did not appear to be a factor which teachers thought would prevent the use of a writing program. In general, teachers' perception of too little time and lack of knowledge about process writing seemed to be items most likely to interfere with content writing instruction.

Teachers were asked in a second survey (Appendix B) to respond to questions or statements which would provide data as to individual views of the participants concerning writing. Seventeen teachers responded they did not write stories or poetry, while 11 stated they did not enjoy writing. Nineteen teachers had not begun a writing program, but classroom writing was evidenced by a varying degree of interest and intent. Eighteen teachers used drawing as a method of writing instruction and introduced writing as a whole class activity. Only two teachers used a designated writing area, and none of the 22 respondents took advantage of a home writing plan.

Causative Analysis

The causes of the problem appeared to come from three sources which are listed in random order. First, providing opportunities for self-expression through writing was in conflict with the curricula, methods, and materials in

use. Writing creatively could not be accomplished through traditional methods of writing instruction because emphasis was placed on handwriting, punctuation, and practice in writing mechanics. This method of writing did not consider the benefits of allowing children to use their imaginations or express themselves with words. In addition, there was no process writing curricula for grades K-2 to follow.

The second cause of the problem seemed to be that few teachers were adequately prepared to initiate a writing program with five and six year old children. Teacher training did not include instruction in process writing or how to promote literacy development through integration with related subject activities.

Third, the image of the first grade child was not that of being a "writer" and therefore efforts to encourage the child in this direction were minimal.

In general, teachers seemed to think there was too little time for writing instruction. This belief together with other inadequate views suggested a meager knowledge about the writing process. Until such attitudes were changed, it was unreasonable to expect much change in the quality of writing instruction.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Our form of architecture "incorporates an attitude toward life, an expression of the underlying patters of cultural values" (Dubos, 1968, p. 176). Buildings talk.

Libraries tell of our emphasis on knowledge. High-rise buildings boast of advances in technology. Restored southern mansions drawl our spirited history, while northern factories echo an industrial era. Log cabins quietly sigh of a wilderness all but vanished.

Schools, as architectural buildings, speak of historical records of the "interplay between human life and the classroom environment" (Dubos, p. 171). This interplay between child and the building called school was evident in the literature review. In many schools, the role of children was to adapt, to follow instructions, and to learn content unrelated to their developmental and interest levels. Emphasis on the transmission of factual knowledge, rote learning, and repeated practice deprives children of the opportunity to act upon the world in meaningful ways. This kind of knowledge is essentially "secondhand from textbooks" (Floyd & Floyd, 1988, p. 42).

In reference to the impact structured rigidity had on students, Surnasky (1982) predicted that children would emerge eighteen years later to enter the world of adulthood having been deprived of their own history-making power. This prediction is feasible unless children are allowed to participate in experiences which include meaningful self-expression. The literature review acknowledged the importance of early literacy development in providing opportunities for creative expression, offering a balance

to the curriculum of academics, and establishing a link to essential learning in other subject areas.

Learning theorist supported the idea that skills improved through experience which encouraged self-awareness. Vogotsky (1986) identified a culture as being a body of knowledge, tools, and skills that humans have built up over the years. The "tools" such as language, helped develop the mind, assisted in problem-solving techniques, and enabled the child to develop inner perspective and individuality.

Once a cultural tool was learned, it changed other psychological processes. Learning continues and expanded with the use of additional tools such as writing. By providing the child with the opportunity for self-expression in writing, the child learned to communicate and realized that "communication was more than words, it was the meaning behind words" (Vogotsky, 1986, p. 104).

Patterson (1986) explained creativity as being consistent with the deepest purpose of life, that of developing and using one's compassionate accomplishment. School curriculum which included self-expression through meaningful writing was found to insure direction for a life-long process.

Providing experience in self-expression was considered by Carl Rogers to be an important way to encourage inner learning. This theory viewed learning in terms of the

individuals perception of himself, his environment, and the meaning attached to experience (1965). Through creative experiences such as writing, ideas and feelings can be formulated in a picture. These images of experiences in turn assist the child to grow in his own culture and find connection from his present to his past. The child learns to be human, and "what is specifically human is the basic feeling that one exists in past and future as well as present" (Herzog, 1983, p. 135).

Similarly, Bollenbach (1986) stated learning should be inner-directed and wanted teachers to dare program lessons through intuition. Through the process of writing, the child is provided with an aesthetic experience in wholeness which will stay with him or her as learning takes place through the senses, sensations, and experiences. Through writing, the child will confer order, sense, and meaning in life and be given the message that she or he "has something important to say" (Buttery & Reitzammer, 1987, p. 262).

Emphasis on the development of the child's potential through writing creatively calls for a new kind of education. Writing process can help in this transaction by creating a sense of well-being through maintaining a balance of academic pace with writing creatively. Although most children cannot read or write when they start school, research has shown they have made a great deal of progress

toward making meaning from written messages (Appendix C). Unfortunately, the typical school has taken little advantage of this learning.

Research showed an increasing concern over quality education, yet the trend toward more seat work and group instruction continues with tests scores being a primary policy making mechanism. Results of standardized tests, however, clearly indicated that traditional methods of teaching writing were not working. Secondhand knowledge acted as a weak catalyst for meaningful literacy development.

Buildings may speak of cultural values, but school children frequently could not write about them. In 1986, the National Assessment of Educational Progress reported that in general, American students could not express themselves well enough to ensure their writing would accomplish the intended purpose (McPike, 1989). Those responsible for teaching writing spend a lot of time with secondary matters such as correctness, grammar, style, and mechanics, but gave little attention to the writing process itself.

Theories of learning that suggested knowledge be broken into district pieces and then taught one by one did not consider the time involved in covering the simple elements nor the fact that students may miss the opportunity to write or talk about complicated matters. Graves (1983)

reminded us that such school experiences can "cut down egos or remove voice from the writing and the person from the print until there is no driving force left" (p. 244).

The "print" teachers continued to follow was a language arts curriculum consisting of "grade-level skills lists patched together from textbooks and other schools curriculum guides" (Atwell, 1989, p. 17). Smith (1989) bluntly stated there was no evidence that the specifications of objectives or teacher manuals and curriculum guides facilitated learning, and further, that "forced instruction can be regarded as the systematic deprivation of experience" (p. 356). The research findings related that literacy was not a set of skills or a finished state; it was an attitude toward the world. Smith maintained that materials and techniques were not enough when it came to learning. Learning was produced by mutual participation in interesting activities.

The systems of instruction and the tests used to evaluate them must be changed in order to restore balance to a system too heavily tilted toward the basics (Cole, 1987). Efforts have been made in some states to create assessments of critical thinking, more sophisticated writing skills, and higher-order thinking skills in hope that the new kinds of tests will force new kinds of teaching.

The Arizona legislature, for example, passed a bill

that all but did away with mandatory testing for first graders. In recent years, standardized testing in the early years has been criticized on the grounds that "the tests take too much time to administer, are unreliable indicators of young children's strength's and weaknesses, and subject children to undue stress" (Raymond, 1988, p.8). Academic achievement depends on more than skill development.

The significance of classroom environment in relation to positive learning experiences in literacy development was known by Calkins (1986) who stated a "gracious, beautiful setting conducive to craftsmanship must be created if we want to raise the standards of student's writing" (p. 214). As a child takes in bits and pieces of information about the world, it is perceived and comprehended in the individual's own unique manner to formulate a truth. In a magnetic way, this truth in turn pulls other items of information to it. Learning continues and expands as the child experiences life, forms a truth, and experiences life once again. The environment in which the child learns was considered by writing authorities to be a vital factor in order to provide learning that was enjoyable, intrinsically rewarding and sustaining, creative, and self-realizing. Process writing can help balance the curricula of academics by providing such a learning atmosphere.

Writing was shown to play an integral role in

connecting essential learning to other curricula areas. Jalonjo and Zeigler (1987) reported that if a child is to become literate in the fullest sense of the word, then the connection among the child's experience, imagination, art, and the curriculum must be fully forged. Writing has been found to "strengthen, enhance, and enrich other disciplines" (Peck, 1986, p. 13).

Graves, for example, used writing as a tool for "understanding the process of gathering and reporting information" (1983, p. 83). Giacobbe advanced the idea that the writer "makes graphic symbols that stand for sound symbols" (1988, p. 256). These experiences had tremendous impact on the development of cognitive processes because writing and drawing involves both the transformation of reality and making mental copies of that reality. As children drew and illustrated stories, they saw their own thoughts take form in the art and writing and gained a sense of order and control in the environment. As cognitive processes developed, the child used this learning in other areas.

Success in drawing was found by Calkins (1986) and Bridge (1988) to lay the groundwork for writing achievement. Calkins maintained drawing helped in writing by allowing the child to focus on a subject and remember what he wanted to write. Brooks (1988) realized a lack of visual perception had "serious educational implications in that

visually illiterate children had difficulty learning to read and write" (p. 16). In order to develop visual perception and expand drawing options, Brooks established a drawing method using five elements of shapes and lines to help translate visual images onto paper.

The literature review provided current research on the literacy developmental needs of young children. In following the accumulated knowledge describing writing programs, it became evident that our changing economy requires creative thinking and writing. Schools "need to find ways to allow extraordinary performance out of ordinary people" (Cole, 1987, p. 49).

It was encouraging to read of a variety of writing programs which attempted to initiate such extraordinary performance while promoting literacy advancement. A review of writing programs and recent statistics offered alternatives to traditional writing instruction practices and prescribed solutions which could be applied in the writer's school setting.

Kindergarten children, for example, experienced writing through dictated stories to the teacher (Martin, 1985). Dictated stories were defined as a whole range of fantasy, poetry, song, accounts of events and experiences, re-telling books, information, opinions, and feelings. Calkins (1986) recommended that kindergarten teachers "rewrite the child's story but also display the child's

invented spelling" (p. 210). Graves added it is important for the child to have the feeling of controlling the writing craft and in order to insure this feeling of ownership, the teacher may type the stories at first, but later allow the child to print his or her own story (Graves, 1989).

Kindergarten children were introduced to the writing process by recording their own stories, but research showed that listening to stories encouraged writing too. Reed (1987) reported a pilot project begun in 1987 by the Connecticut Storytelling Center. The purpose of the project was to explore the possible use of storytelling to increase attention spans, listening skills, sequencing, fluency, and writing. It was found that storytelling was a "springboard for writing" (Reed, 1987, p. 35). Results showed children to be more enthusiastic for writing and more excited to share ideas after storytelling experiences.

Fairy tales were found to be "the most meaningful as a source of literature" (Bettelheim, 1981, p. 83). Fairy tales were described as being expressions of our cultural heritage which gave some of the answers of who we are. They were found to liberate the imagination and help children make sense of their existence. Barton (1986) wrote "There are thousands of stories from which to make your choice, but you will not go wrong with folktales (P.24).

The preprimers and primer from which the child is taught to read was described by Elkind as being "shallow"

(1981, p. 83). Elkind also placed emphasis on fairy tales as a way for children to stay in tune with themselves and others. Additional research findings pointed to the use of literature in helping children learn about the language and structure of narrative (Buttery & Reitzammer, 1989). Reinehr (1987) found that children came to school with plenty of experiences to write about and that stories act as a catalyst to encourage this process. By reading fairy tales and myths to young children, they were encouraged to tell their own stories in writing.

While a number of articles connected the relationship between literature and meaningful writing activity, other findings associated improvement with opportunities for extended writing outside the school setting. To illustrate, Lamme (1982) recommended fostering an early childhood writing curriculum by encouraging writing development at home. Likewise, Clay (1988) stated the child can learn the importance of writing as a part of life by writing notes and messages at home. An interesting idea by Durst (1988) served to help children develop confidence as writers by allowing them to take a bear home. The children wrote stories daily about the bear. This tangible, concrete object also served as a stimulus for make believe.

Notewriting was interpreted by Karelitz (1988) as "literate behavior" and provided opportunities to practice a variety of written forms (p. 112). Notewriting was

presented as a valuable way for children to have extra writing activities and experiences in argumentation, persuasion, and regulation. Notes were seen to give children confidence in writing abilities as skills increased in encoding and decoding written messages.

According to Karelitz (1988) notes were written for specific purposes which did not rely on memory for writing. Reluctant writers and children who had difficulty maintaining interest or finding topics benefited from notewriting. Because the note was brief, the child learned to choose words with care and be mindful of audience reaction. Notewriting developed into letter writing or other forms of writing. Notes were found to be useful in "rituals, correspondence, problem-solving, reporting, questioning, and regulation" (Karelitz, 1988, p. 90). Meagher (1986) suggested notes be used as a tool for writing and solving social problems. In Meagher's first grade classroom, children wrote notes to the teacher whenever a problem came but but the teacher was busy. The notes were answered the same day and provided experience in problem solving skills as well as writing.

Post cards were used by Raymond (1988) as a way to encourage writing and the cards made a book at the same time. Children sent cards home from their vacation which were saved and later made into a book. The post card book provided an account of summer vacation, gave experience

in writing, and was a source of sharing at the beginning of the next school year. As in notewriting, children were required to concentrate on short, well thought out words.

An outline was determined by Johnson (1986) to be an equally vital tool in writing. An imagination workshop was developed and presented in hundreds of classrooms throughout the country. The developers claimed children couldn't write because they did not know how to create an outline. The procedure called for the entire class to make up a story following an outline, which resulted in children creating a story from beginning to end. The outline method was adjusted to fit the abilities of children kindergarten through the eight grade.

An example of a successful first grade writing program was reported by Meagher (1987) who described the effort as being "student tested". The children were not yet reading and were still learning to form letters. The children actually set the pace and structure of the writing activities. The program demonstrated the results of students being allowed voice in their own learning process.

A point of view which promoted the use of picture dictionaries to encourage writing was explained by Hillerich (1987) who advocated this tool for vocabulary building and practice in alphabetical order. While Hillerich referred to professionally published dictionaries as a helpful spelling reference and source of ideas,

Meagher (1986) suggested extending this method by having the children make their own picture dictionaries. By stapling construction paper together with 13 pages of notepaper inside, the youngsters developed the dictionary around their own needs and interest. The children labeled each side of the 13 pages with a letter of the alphabet and supplied the pictures and words themselves.

Calkins (1986) stressed research findings that recommend not being too concerned with lists of key words or picture dictionaries as resources for the first stages in writing. Independent writing was encouraged by having the children focus on content and language and practice invented spelling. Concern with correct spelling made children lose track of what they wanted to say.

The method of correction used to assist the child played an important part in determining whether or not the youngster would take risks in writing. Children became discouraged about writing if errors or misspelled words were met with disapproval. Writing authorities encouraged the use of invented spelling which was defined as "the name for children's misspellings before they know the rules to apply to spell" (Sowers, 1988, p. 62). According to Temple (1989) kindergarten and first grade children should be encouraged to "draw, scribble, and write with invented spelling" (p. 71).

Additional information concerning successful methods

to use in a writing program were provided in the "Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program" (HPEWP). The handbook was designed to provide California schools with a standard of assessing their existing writing program and to serve as a tool for designing new programs. According to their findings, motivation was considered to be the heart of the writing process (HPEWP, p. 6).

Motivation comes from different sources. Graves stated ownership supplies the motivation and students must be allowed to choose topics, control, and claim authorship of what they write. When children have ownership of their writing, "they supply the motivation, the energy" (Graves, 1983, p. 54). The HPEWP also found motivation came as children knew what they wrote was important and experienced "the power of language when they were in control and realized this control when they received responses to their writing" (HPEWP, p. 7).

This kind of growth in writing occurred in conferences where the piece of writing got reactions from teacher and peers as well. According to the HPEWP, writing which included response was found to produce superior results. Research has shown that "grammar is best taught when a specific need for it emerges in the student's writing, not in isolation from actual wrilting" (HPEWP, p. 4). Response during conference time was found to be important in understanding spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Cadieux (1988) stated that children can show us "when instruction is most effective" (p. 79).

There has been a tendency for skills to be taught in isolation, but some researchers concluded that efforts were negative in programs where excessive time was devoted to the study of grammar independently of the writing process. Skills were best learned at appropriate times during writing because students could practice the interrelationship of the skill in their own writing (HPEWP, p. 6).

In addition to response from audiences, the young writer needs a model. Smith (1983) agreed that anyone who hoped to teach others how to write must demonstrate what writing can do and show how to do it. Students needed to see adults writing and to share their success or failure. Graves stated "The tone of writing is set by what the teacher does, not by what the teacher says" (Graves, 1989, p. 43). Modeling helped the writing become a process of writing and sharing together. Students needed to understand the thinking that accompanied the writing such as selecting a topic or looking for a better words. Temple agreed (1987) that models helped children write their best. Teachers who participated in modelling contributed to improving the writing from the students.

The review of the literature demonstrated that traditional methods of writing instruction have failed.

A number of educators and writing authorities pointed to the necessity of providing writing instruction with consideration for the early literacy developmental needs of children. Structured rigidity in the classroom did not provide an atmosphere for meaningful writing. In reviewing research findings concerning succesful writing programs, the significance of process writing as a form of self-expression, a balance to academics, and a link to other subject areas was evident.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

Research had shown that traditional methods of writing instruction which placed unnecessary attention to mechanics did not provide significant growth in literacy development. Calkins (1986) stated that in most American classrooms, "the teacher's focus is not on the child, but on the unit of study, the textbook, and the prepackaged curriculum" (p. 6). The emphasis on mechanics and undue concern for transcription (i.e. vs. composition) contributed to the negative attitude both students and teachers had toward writing. To change this attitude, those who instructed children in writing creatively needed to be provided with information about writing (Atwell, 1989) as they were "not getting process writing instruction on the undergraduate or graduate level" (McPike, 1989, p. 17). Smith (1983) found the major functions of writing to be the creation of experiences and exploration of ideas. In order for children to discover their own writing process and be given control of their learning, the classroom must be prepared

to change (Turbill, 1982).

Accordingly, the first goal was to change the character of first grade writing instruction so that emphasis was properly placed upon content and stimulating the imagination rather than on the mechanics of expression.

The literature review stressed the importance of writing in connecting us with ourselves, others, and the outer world. Writing was not seen as a a matter of steps to follow, but rather was viewed as as a part of all our existence (Smith, 1983). Karelitz (1988) considered writing activities such as note writing as "literate behavior" (p. 112) and suggested such tools of learning be used in new situations that go beyond the classroom (p. 108).

Therefore, the second goal was to provide children with extended writing opportunities using a variety of writing forms and a variety of audiences.

Children shouldn't "feel isolated" during the writing process (Graves, 1983, p. 92). Calkins expanded this observation by adding that it was "essential children were deeply involved in writing, shared with others, and perceived themselves as authors" (1986, p. 9). It was also important for other people to view the first grade child as a capable writer, which in turn may encourage efforts on the part of teachers and adults to provide writing experiences for the children.

Thus, the third goal addressed this issue by providing

opportunities for first graders to read and display their stories to extended audiences.

We are told that "all children are born capable of learning to write at least as well as they learn to talk but something goes wrong" (Smith, 1983, p. 2). Teachers must become observers of children in a process writing classroom, and as observer, learn with the children and discover ways to keep writing "going right".

The fourth goal addressed the need to change the structure and pace of the writer's classroom in order to provide children with an environment in which to try "new, strange ways of writing" (Calkins, 1986, p. 145). The fourth goal provided children with unstructured time in the writer's classroom to write daily on topics of their own selection.

Behavior Expected

The following behavioral expectations were realized.

1. First grade teachers established writing centers in their classrooms.
2. The writer initiated a home writing plan in her first grade classroom.
3. First grade teachers provided experiences for children in reading and displaying their writing for others through a writing exchange program.
4. The writer provided children in her first grade classroom with regularly-scheduled, unstructured time

to write on topics of their own choosing.

Measurement of Objectives

The following measurements of objectives were used.

1. For the first objective, the evaluation tool was the number of first grade classes which established writing centers. A writing center was defined as a specific area where children have time to write freely on topics of their own selection with emphasis on content and the imagination. The standard of achievement was at least four of the eleven first grade teachers would use writing centers in their rooms. This was determined by the number actually seen which conformed to the general criteria for a writing center.
2. The evaluation tool for the second objective was the number of children who participated in a home writing plan. The home writing plan was defined as an extended writing experience in which children wrote at home and shared what they had written at school. The standard of achievement was all of the students in the writer's room selected to take home a stuffed animal, wrote of the the overnight experience with the toy, and shared the stories at school. In addition, children participated in the home writing plan by writing in a variety of forms. This was determined by the number of children who read their stories at at school and shared samples of different forms used.

3. The evaluation tool for the third objective was the number of classes which participated in a writing exchange program. This program was defined as a method by which children wrote stories and read them to to children in other rooms. Additional publication was provided by displaying the stories and illustrations within the school. The standard of achievement was no less than ten classrooms exchanged writers and displayed stories once a week for the duration of the program. This was determined by the number of teachers who provided lists of children who read their stories in other rooms and had their stories and drawings displayed.
4. The evaluation tool for the fourth objective was the amount of time spent in process writing per week in the writer's room. "Writing time" was defined as frequently occurring time in which children wrote daily on topics of their own selection. The standard of achievement was no less than 30 minutes were spent in writing daily for at least four days a week. This was determined by the schedule of daily activities as written in the teacher plan book.

Description of Plans for Analyzing Results

The following steps were used to analyze results.

1. Results of writing centers were analyzed through two Likert scale closed item questionnaires which were

given at the mid and end of the program. The scales differed in questions but each asked respondents to select one of five possible answers to each statement. Results were also analyzed through open ended questionnaires given to teachers at inservice meetings.

2. Results of the home writing plan were analyzed from artifacts of the various writing forms. The samples provided information as to the degree of interest and progress of the children. Analysis was also made from a closed item questionnaire given to parents. A table provided a visual method of analysis and showed the number of children involved in the program and the variety of writing forms attempted.
3. Results of the writing exchange program was analyzed by a completed photo album taken of the weekly displays of drawings and stories of the writers. It provided visual representation of the writing exchange program. In addition, teachers who had children in the program were given a closed item checklist with multiple selections concerning program effectiveness.
4. Results of time spent in writing was analyzed by the writer's log of classroom activities which was used regularly throughout the program. Writing folders showed the number and variety of writings completed. The teacher plan book recorded writing time.

Mechanism for Recording Unexpected Results

Implementation procedure was recorded in a log which provided detailed information concerning unexpected results. Photos taken throughout implementation were also useful as a method of recording unexpected results.

Calendar Plan

The following steps were taken to fulfill the goals of the process writing program.

October, November, December

1. Received permission for use of site, materials, personal assistance, and any other need related to the program.
2. Prepared classroom arrangement such as a writer's bulletin board and writing folders.
3. Completed paperwork such as evaluations, correspondence, and surveys.
4. Established communication with parents.
5. Began notations in log for evaluation purposes.
6. Began teacher in-service.
7. Began process writing in the classroom such as writing conferences, unstructured writing time, drawing experiences, literature, and mini lessons.
8. Established writing centers in other first grade classrooms and made plans to monitor progress throughout implementation.
9. Prepared necessary materials and paperwork for the home writing program to begin in December.
10. Prepared mid-evaluation.

January, February, March

1. Gave mid-evaluation.
2. Made changes in the program when necessary.
3. Began home writing program.
4. Made arrangements for writer's exchange program.
5. Monitored writer's corner in classroom.
6. Continued writing in classroom.
7. Prepared evaluation of home writing program.
8. Continued teacher in-service.
9. Continued student evaluation of writing folders.
10. Began writer's exchange.

April, May, June, July

1. Continued implementation plans.
2. Prepared evaluations for writing components.
3. Provided information to local organizations, paper, or groups about first grade writers.
4. Prepared summer writing projects and parent's handbook.
5. Evaluated writing program .

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solution

The problem in the writer's school was that traditional methods of teaching writing were not meeting the developmental needs of first grade children. The present program was not adequate in stimulating the imagination or offering meaningful writing experiences. Attitudes toward writing had to change in order writing instruction to change. Research had found that traditional methods of teaching writing were not working, so programs which attempted to instill literacy development through this approach were eliminated. It seemed unlikely a solution would be found in theories of learning which proposed academic achievement through repetition and drill.

A variety of writing activities were reviewed and considered as possible components in the development of a writing program. Some of the activities were primarily isolated projects which included writing and reflected the view that writing should be taught as a separate subject. Other writing activities covered grade levels from kindergarten through high school, with no specific breakdown for application at any one grade. Many of the articles were too general, too short in time span,

limited in purpose, and unfounded in credibility. Although they were successful as projects, they could not be included in the process writing program.

An article by Meagher (1986) described a first grade writing program which was implemented with children of the same age and ability grouping as the students in the writer's classroom. This successful program offered excellent ideas to foster writing. Unlike the Meagher program, the writer's program included other classrooms in order to meet the goals necessary to solve the problem in this school setting.

The writer concluded the best method of inquiry would be to determine what writing authorities considered important in the development of a successful process writing program. For example, research identified successful writing programs as those which shared the characteristics of a frequently recurring writing time in a variety of modes and for a variety of audiences (HPEWP). In addition, modeling, emphasis on the value of writing, and using writing as an important tool in all curricula areas were elements found to advance meaningful writing. Furthermore, the components of response, drawing, ownership, invented spelling, and exposure to extensive literature were attributed to the promotion of literacy development. With these characteristics in mind, the writer selected components which would have the greatest impact on the

literacy development involved.

Assessment of student progress and methods of documentation were of equal concern. Routine school grades and evaluations made it necessary for the writer to record information about developing skills in grammar, spelling, and even decoding. A way was needed to explain the writing program to administrators, teachers, visitors, and parents. In addition, a means to assess the progress of invented spelling and provide an explanation as to the usefulness of invented spelling was seen as important.

A clear exposition of such views was found in the literature which recommended and justified a method by which writing could be assessed and recorded. Both Rynkofs (1988) and Graves (1988) considered the writing folder as an assessment and record of skills. The writing folder could be sent home as progress reports, thus sharing the child's writing development with parents. The folder could also serve "as a teaching tool" (Bingham, 1988, p. 217). Children could establish a sense of accomplishment by seeing how their own work had progressed. The writing folder was seen as a valuable way to give evidence of all stages of writing and a way to document progress.

In conclusion, the writer selected solution strategies which were non-traditional in nature and placed emphasis on the process of learning to write instead of the finished product. The writer saw the advantage of using research

which provided characteristics of successful writing programs in contrast to just selecting writing activities which were considered "successful". The writer used information from a wide variety of sources to find a solution to the problem.

Description of Selected Solution

The writer solved the problem through the development of a process writing program for first grade children. Hillerich (1987) offered a substantial explanation of why a process approach is justifiable. Although product is important, it needs to be improved, and "we can do a better job of teaching writing if instructional emphasis is on the process" (p. 24). A writing program needs to place importance on the process of how and why instead of the correctness of who, what, when, and where. Hillerich pointed out that product will take care of itself if process is appropriate.

The writer therefore applied the recommendations of writing authorities who have validated process writing as being a successful method to enhance literacy development. Writing centers and a writing exchange program involved other classrooms. Within her own classroom, a home writing program, literature, drawing, and invented spelling were activated. In addition, her classroom management and environment was changed in order for time, modeling, response, and ownership to be included in the

program. The program provided a frame for characteristics of successful writing programs to be present in varying degrees and numbers within the previously listed areas.

A non-traditional approach was selected to provide meaningful writing experiences to first grade children. The method of writing instruction was one based upon informed observation, in contrast to teaching writing through instruction in mechanics. The program applied Grave's definition (1983, p. 250) that "Process refers to everything a person does from the time he first contemplates the topic to the final moment when he completes the paper", and more important for the purpose of this paper was his statement that "a student can only know process by actually doing the writing".

In order to be successful in the implementation of a process writing program, this definition cannot be overemphasized. Writing authorities clearly asserted the importance of children being deeply involved in writing. The components of the program were selected and adapted for their potential in offering maximum writing opportunities.

The solution for the first goal was to change the manner in which first grade writing instruction was taught so that emphasis was properly placed upon content and stimulating the imagination rather than on the mechanics of expression. The "manner" in which writing was presently

taught was by traditional emphasis on mechanics and repetition.

Evidence of the problem revealed that present methods of writing instruction conflicted with the efforts to foster process writing. Teachers did not know how to promote literacy development through integration with other subjects. In addition, it was believed that a set time had to be established for teaching writing. Teacher training did not include sufficient information on ways to break away from traditional methods so that a method with emphasis on the value of writing could be tried.

In order to change the character of first grade writing so that it would include emphasis on content and the imagination, teachers were assisted in using a writing center in their classrooms. One of the characteristics of a successful writing program was that it include an emphasis on the value of writing. A writing center would serve both student and teacher as they came to accept and understand the contribution invented spelling played in writing. As children used the writing center and it became a valuable part of the classroom, they were encouraged to take risk in writing and use their imaginations.

Teacher inservice provided information about process writing, integrating writing with other areas of curricula, and invented spelling. As a component to the writing program, the writing center was a source of continued

education in writing.

The solution selected for addressing the second goal was to provide extended writing opportunities by using a variety of forms and for different audiences. Writing is part of our existence and not just something children "do" at school. Writing was seen as important in connecting us with ourselves, others, and the outer world, yet few children were given means by which they could write in new situations that went beyond the classroom. Evidence of the problem found that these opportunities were not being sufficiently provided within the school. None of the teachers, including the writer, encouraged writing out of the school setting through any kind of writing plan.

In order to provide extended opportunities for literacy development, the writer initiated a home writing component to the process writing program. This activity was available to children in the writer's classroom. Classroom teachers who wanted to participate in a home writing activity within their own room were assisted in the implementation of this experience.

One of the characteristics of a successful writing program was the use of a variety of writing forms with a variety of audiences. The home writing program included notes, making cards, letters, messages, and taking a stuffed animal home to use as a stimulus for writing. In addition, children wrote to friends and other people in the community.

The home writing activity described by Durst (1988) was used to encourage writing at home. The children took home a stuffed animal which served as a catalyst for writing both fantasy stories and narratives. Parents were provided with a handbook on writing (Appendix D) in an effort to distill the notion that writing must be done in a special way. The handbook also explained the program and included a list of suggestions and materials for encouraging writing at home. Additional writing activities were introduced as they were presented.

The home writing component was extended into the summer months in order to fulfill the requirements of this practicum. Children were involved in writing activities which included post cards, journals, or writing to friends.

Finding a solution to meeting the third goal involved opportunities for children to read and display their stories to extended audiences. First grade students were not seen as "writers". Even when children were allowed writing time at a writing center, their craft could have easily remained behind four walls. In order to advance the image of first grade children as being that of "writer", their stories were published. Nathan (1989) suggested numerous ways in which publication could occur. These included an author's chair, interest area for stimulating writing, and space where individual children could write and think by themselves (p. 25). Specifically, illustrations and

stories were published by displaying their writing craft on a centrally located bulletin board. The writer was responsible for collecting and returning the writings which were changed weekly during the program.

Additional suggestions for publication were used in the writer's classroom. Teachers were provided with methods of publishing the writing of the children in their own rooms. Through reading their stories to other children and frequently displaying their crafts, the children had opportunities to experience the publication considered necessary for meaningful writing to occur.

The solution for addressing the fourth goal was to change the writer's classroom environment and management procedures in order for children to have frequently recurring daily time to write on topics of their own selection. The structure and pace of the classroom was changed in order for the young writers to develop their craft.

Frequently recurring writing time was seen as one of the characteristics of a successful writing program. In order to accomplish this, the writer turned the room into a process writing classroom. The following components were used along with recommendations from writing authorities such as Calkins, Graves, Temple, and Atwell.

The classroom was organized to facilitate a writing program. McDonald (1989) offered suggestions for classroom

management which included "functional space arrangement, appropriate interest areas, and workable seating placement" (p. 25). These ideas were used in the establishment of a supportive atmosphere for writing.

Inventive spelling was encouraged because it developed a good attitude toward writing and encouraged children to take risks. Sowers (1988) assures those who work with children that errors in inventive spelling don't "interfere with learning to spell correctly" and that "like early attempts to walk, initial attempts to spell do not produce habits to be overcome" (p. 62).

The use of extensive literature was a component in the program. The oral language experience was found to reinforce effective writing programs. Giff (1987) said that "Reading books is an education in itself" (p. 35). The writer therefore read books of poetry, facts, fairy tales, myths, and books that covered the span of human experience on a daily basis.

Children needed to be given the message that what they wrote was important, too. In order to convey the meaning that their writing was valuable, the stories the children originated were read along with professional books. In addition, children read their own books to other children as well.

Drawing was included in the program because the writer noticed that children hesitated to illustrate because they

were under the impression that they couldn't draw. First graders were taught to improve their drawing skills through a method by Brooks (1988) who used a "family of lines and circles to teach basic shapes which can be applied to drawing" (p. 16). Pictures were found to have meaning for young children as they began to find words to go with the pictures. Drawing considered the importance of developing a fully functional individual through the confidence gained as children freely use their imaginations. Experience in visual perception through drawing expanded into writing.

Writing folders were the primary method by which writing was assessed and recorded. The folder served as a teaching tool because the children documented their own progress by seeing their work. This method was recommended by Rynkokfs (1988) as a justifiable way to record skills and assess writing development. The writing folder also provided valuable information which was used in the final report of the process writing program. The writer was especially interested in the writing folder as a way to explain the writing process to teachers.

The writer served as a model, both in drawing and writing. Dictation was used along with invented spelling. Children were able to participate in decision making concerning their own learning.

Work in progress was stored in the writing folder.

Topic sheets were kept on the left while drafts in progress were on the right. The topic sheet found to best work with first grade children was illustrated by Nathan (1988) and included space for both pictures and words.

The writing period was planned for about an hour. As a general guide, the time frame suggested by Nathan (1989, p. 20) was used. Approximately fifteen minutes were for writing time, twenty minutes for conference, and ten minutes for sharing either published drafts for focused teacher-directed lessons. The order and time sequence changed according to the needs of the children.

In conclusion, the writer implemented a process writing program as a solution to the problem. Research findings provided strategies and guides to follow, but these methods were adapted to meet the needs of the unique situation in the writer's school. Change was found to be necessary within the educational system for children to have meaningful writing experiences.

Report of Actions Taken

The problem statement placed emphasis on the need for writing instruction to address the developmental capabilities of first grade children. The present writing program was considered inadequate in stimulating the imagination or presenting opportunities for self-expression. Meaningful writing experiences were further prevented because of the preoccupation with traditional handwriting practices.

Instruction needed to focus on meaningful writing experiences. Equally important, children needed a designated area in which to write, a variety of writing opportunities, publication of literacy efforts, and time to write on subjects of their own selection.

The plan to meet those needs was put into action by receiving permission for use of site, personnel, and necessary materials in the implementation of the proposal. The writer met with the principal, explained the general plan and length of the program, and obtained his support in reaching practicum goals.

Decisions were made as to the most appropriate means by which to gather and organize information, maintain accurate records, and monitor progress. Additionally, the writer considered school scheduled activities and planned writing projects in conjunction with holidays and events.

Accumulated knowledge about writing development advanced the idea that the process of writing and not just the product be allowed. In like manner, the writer considered the "process" of inservice. Acting to positively guide the attitude and behavior of others required consideration for the interpersonal relationships between writer and participant, between teacher and student. If children were to be given the message that their writing had value, it seemed reasonable to expect adults would need to realize their own worth as facilitators.

Smith (1986) was interested in knowing what made writers start writing and what kept them at it. According to his findings, they "all mentioned a person, a teacher who respected students and who respected the subjects they taught and thought that writing was worthwhile" (p. 170).

Inservice began with the belief that one person could profoundly influence not only present writing attempts, but future writing efforts of students as well. Working from this point of view, the basic characteristics of the process writing classroom were adapted to inservice techniques, with emphasis placed on listening, questioning, supporting, and offering assistance when needed.

Information was provided through inservice on writing centers, process writing procedures, materials, modeling, publication, and predictability in relation to inservice. A report of actions in relation to inservice follows.

The following actions were taken to change the character of first grade writing instruction so that emphasis was properly placed upon content and writing creatively rather than on the mechanics of expression. Research had pointed out the necessity of change in order to foster literacy. In order for children to express themselves through written words, less emphasis must be placed on writing mechanics. Cole pointed out that schools needed to "find ways of allowing extraordinary performance out of ordinary people" (1987, p. 49).

The significance of this thought was that attitudes toward writing had to change. Ordinary children could perform in an extraordinary way if allowed, but teacher training had not included instruction in maintaining process writing centers or promoting literacy development through integration with related subject areas. Nineteen of 22 respondents in a survey given at the first of the school year (Appendix B) said they had not begun a writing program.

In order to change the quality of writing instruction and place importance on children feeling good about their literacy efforts, the writer provided teacher inservice in the establishment of process writing centers. Actions were taken to clarify inservice procedure and terminology frequently heard in a process writing classroom. Once the initial meeting was conducted, remaining inservice was usually on an individual basis.

The writer first met with a small group of teachers who had said they wanted to begin a writing center in their rooms. Further inservice throughout implementation was usually with individual teachers. Writing centers were defined as designated areas where children could write freely on topics of their own selection. The area had a sign, stars of different sizes, and plenty of writing paper. Although all the writing center signs for the program were identical, teachers and students decided on their color theme and the writer provided stars of their color choice. Teachers determined when the area would be used for writing, but emphasis was placed on allowing the center to be used daily.

Teachers were given knowledge about daily writing and background information on process writing procedures such as the writing conference. Turbill (1989) defined the conference as "brief discussions with an individual child or small groups which may occur at any time writing is occurring" (p. 11). These discussions would be more successful if approached with patience and the understanding that the children would be on different levels in writing development. The purpose of the conference was to assist when needed, but to allow the child time to think. Teachers were instructed in questioning techniques used by Graves which were "questions that they might become able to ask on their own" (1983, p. 117).

Teachers had followed the process writing procedure about spelling and told the students, as D'Ambrosio recommended "not to worry about spelling, punctuation, or any other mechanical skill on the initial draft" (D'Ambrosio, 1988, p. 52). While the writer's class was familiar with the questioning techniques as described by Graves and were comfortable with using invented spelling, students in one classroom remained hesitant to write.

With permission from the teacher for the writer's entire class to visit the room, the children took their stories and read them to the room with the hesitant writers. The writer asked the children why they didn't want to write. They didn't write, they said, because they couldn't spell. At this point, the children from the writer's room were invited into the discussion and answered questions. The class wanted to know where "they got all those words" and "did they come from spelling lists" and "did they ask their teacher how to spell the words". Questions and answers went back and forth for nearly an hour. During that time, 45 children became teachers and learners together.

This is mentioned because it exemplified the basic concept behind process writing, that children learn to write by writing. Students will not write until they know their efforts will be accepted, and by allowing students to become a part of inservice, they not only helped each other but adults learned from the experience as well.

Materials were further defined as anything which advanced writing. Broadly speaking, materials were paper, journals, note paper, articles on writing, books, ideas, writing folders, crayons and pencils. The writer considered it her responsibility to equip teachers with material for the centers. As teachers became more aware of the writing process and what was needed, they collected and shared a variety of writing activities.

Teachers were given ideas on how to model writing. It was suggested they "think aloud" as they wrote in order to demonstrate how thinking and writing go together. Modeling writing about things that happened in the classroom or experiences were recommended. Temple (1987) stated that teachers who participated in modeling contributed to improved writing from the students.

Inservice on publication was defined by Turbill (1989) who made it understood that publication is "not just publishing a book, it is getting the writing to readers, getting it read" (p. 46). The general rule was that publication could be through displays, reading original stories, or any other means by which the audience could hear or read the story.

A child in the writer's room saw a teacher in a downtown restaurant, wrote of the incident, and asked to read the story to the teacher. Groups of children also published by reading to peers or other classrooms.

Publication usually meant selecting a favorite story, making corrections, and then displaying it. The writer was responsible for displays on the main bulletin board and in the pod area, while teachers displayed writing in their rooms. As a part of inservice, publication was best explained through example as children "published" what they had written.

Concerning writing centers and writing classrooms, Turbill stated they should be "predictable" which meant children would "know where they can get supplies when they run out, know rules such as what to do if a word can't be spelled, or if a pencil needs to be sharpened or a paper is finished" (1989, p. 15). Likewise, teachers were given inservice as to what to do if children stopped writing, if the room appeared chaotic, or if the amount of writing became overwhelming.

Inservice was the means by which teachers promoted literacy development through integration with related subject areas. Children were encouraged to write for what was called special interest projects. For example, one teacher used writing with the science lesson in which children wrote to a candy company, explaining there were unequal pieces of candy in each package. The company wrote back to say the candy was packaged by weight, not the number of pieces. The children received free chocolate candy, along with a valuable writing experience.

The writer agreed with Pinnel (1989, p. 182) that "When children experience and use reading and writing in real-life situations, they learn more about those processes, emerging as readers and writers". Real life situations which called for using a variety of writing forms existed at school.

The following actions were taken to provide children with extended writing opportunities using a variety of writing forms and a variety of audiences. The writer identified natural school opportunities and grouped them into categories of note writing, home writing, and opportunity writing.

Note writing included any type of short message such as notes to peers, lists, and cards. Home writing consisted of journal writing done at home and then read to audiences at school. Opportunity writing existed when a real life situation provided the opportunity for practice in literacy development. Spontaneous moments in writing for a specific purpose required only the willingness to take advantage of the opportunity. The three areas were often interwoven. Note writing, for example, became opportunity writing when an unexpected occasion required a card or a thank-you note.

Note writing began early in the writing program and continued until the end of school. Children wrote notes to each other and to the writer. A message board was used for the notes. Class names were listed on the board so

they could easily be copied on the front of the note. Students wrote early in the morning and picked up the notes at recess. A specific time was set for note writing because the children liked it so much they wanted to write notes all day, which sometimes caused disruptions in the class. A chart was placed on the note board for a month in order to determine the number and breakdown of who was writing and how much. The children put a mark by their name in a box for each day a note was written. They only marked the days they wrote, not the number of notes written in a day. The writer cut all the note paper, which was a good way of keeping up with how much paper was used, and subsequently how many notes were written in all.

Note writing had been used successfully by Maegher (1986) in her first grade classroom as a tool for getting experience in problem solving skills and writing as well. As with the Maegher classroom, the writer encouraged the children to use invented spelling and think for themselves.

As previously stated, note writing included any type of short message. Index cards were given to the children to take home and make a list of objects in their rooms. Lists were also made of things at school which correlated with other subject areas. One of the favorite "lists" was that of snacks brought to school. The students gained confidence in making lists, and when the subject of "topic list" came up, they had familiarity with the procedure.

Cards, as with notes, gave practice in writing short messages for a specific purpose. Some cards were mailed, others hand delivered. The children brought addresses to school of relatives to whom they wanted to mail a Christmas card. The writer purchased cards for the class. The students wrote notes inside and addressed the envelopes themselves. Cards were sent to Georgia, Florida, Texas, Pennsylvania, South and North Carolina, Nebraska, and Alabama. The majority of the cards were sent locally. A map of the United States was used to show the destination of the cards. The children enthusiastically shared comments from those who had received the cards.

Blank thank-you notes were taken home over the holiday to be given to anyone the child wanted to show appreciation for. Children were instructed to consider all kinds of gifts such as a special trip or making cookies. Paper was always available for those youngsters who wanted to make notes or cards at home.

The class surprised the principal with a cooperative effort birthday card. Pictures were taken for the room photo display. Get well cards were made for students in the class who had been absent for prolonged periods of time. The class participated in a nation wide project to send cards to a child whose illness was terminal. Thank you cards were written throughout the year as well. The children even assisted with notes to teachers!

The first extended writing activity involved a stuffed toy, a raccoon, which served as a catalyst for writing as children took the animal home overnight and wrote of the adventures in a journal. The project extended the writing curriculum into the student's homes and included the participation of many of the parents. The entries were read each morning in school from the author's chair.

This idea was recommended by Durst (1988) as a way to get children interested in writing at home. While the research article related using a bear as the stimulus, a raccoon was selected because of it was a familiar state animal to the children. It was not uncommon to find a real raccoon in the yard.

Once the washable toy was purchased, a light weight Nova book bag was used as a carrying case for the raccoon, journal, and several sharpened pencils. The name of the school and phone number was printed on the bag with permanent ink along with the request to return if found.

To prepare for this experience, the students were given background information about raccoons and their habits. The inclination of the animal to roam prompted the suggestion for naming the toy "Ramble". The students were told that could take Ramble home as a guest, but first must have permission. Letters were sent to parents explaining the project (Appendix E) along with the permission slip (Appendix F). This activity, as other

writing projects, was voluntary.

A large wall calendar was used to schedule the visit. If a child scheduled was absent, the next child took Ramble. A class journal was used to record the experience. Each entry was dated. The children used invented spelling although parents were encouraged to assist the child if a request for help was made. A photo of each child reading his own entry from the Author's Chair while holding Ramble was taken.

The writer used the photos to extend the writing experience into other curriculum areas. A huge map of the county was posted in the pod area. Each student's photo was attached to a piece of yarn which led to the location of their home on the map. The map display was seen not only in the writer's classroom area, but was taken to other school sites as well.

Once Ramble was left on the school bus by accident. The front office immediately contacted the bus garage which in turn notified the bus driver. Ramble was delivered to school in person, much to the delight and relief of the children. This event led to another writing opportunity. The class dictated a letter to the bus driver (Appendix G) thanking her for returning the toy.

Ramble gave many other occasions for writing. The children wanted to make a Valentine Day card bag in February for the raccoon. Cards were opened and "read" to Ramble,

an idea used by Chiseri-Strater (1988) as a "way for children to use their own competencies and strengths and expand them further" (p. 33). Students read notes, stories, and books to Ramble, and the stuffed raccoon was a frequent topic of daily conversation and writing.

Ramble became not only a beloved toy but a symbol of pride and achievement in writing. They voted "yes", in writing of course, to take raccoon home for a second time. When all the children in the room had taken Ramble home for a visit, the room celebrated by having a party. The party for Ramble was the most popular writing celebration for the year. On the last day of school, a drawing determined who would take Ramble home for "keeps".

The holidays in December offered two weeks at home and time for writing. Journals were made by stapling writing paper between sheets of colorful construction paper. Again, the writing was voluntary. Children were told to do anything they wanted to with the paper. Seven children returned to school with illustrations, stories, lists, and notes. They read the stories to guests. A picture of the "Holiday Writers" appeared in the local paper (Appendix H). The classroom writing celebration took on a New Year excitement as the children used the noise makers, put on party hats and shared their stories. One of the children gave balloons to everyone, including Ramble, who was passed around the room while the students ate home

made chocolate cake made by the teacher.

Writing celebration did not slow down after the first of the year. In February, the children took home the "March Writing Packet", a large manila envelope filled with a variety of writing paper. The activity was to give the the opportunity to expand and develop writing skills in real life situations, as "Many of the literate experiences that occur at home take place as parents and children go about their daily lives" (Strickland & Taylor, 1989, p.253). Thirteen children returned the packet in March, read their stories to guests, and had their pictures taken.

Summer Writing was the last Home Writing activity which consisted of story starters, pencils, paper, writing ideas (Appendix D) and personalized note paper. Two self-addressed envelopes made it convenient for parents to return the Summer Writing survey and for children to write a letter to the teacher. In a time when "letter writing is really a dying art" (Banderjee, 1990, p. 1F), the children were asked to mail a letter and told they would receive a letter in return.

The children were reminded of the suggestion by Raymond (1988) to send home cards from their vacation which could be saved and made into a book. One of the students brought a card book from home after hearing of the idea at school. The book was admired and examined by the class, so they were familiar with how to make one.

Materials for the three areas of writing were both hand made and commercial. Many of the cards, for example, were made by students. Some were purchased. Note paper was ditto paper cut into four sections with "from" printed in the corner of each section. One set of note paper had each child's picture at the top. The picture worked out well, because the children sometimes forgot to say who the note was from.

Keeping parents informed was an important issue and numerous ways were used to include the home in the writing adventure. Several of Turbill's ideas (1989, p. 69) such as "having children write to parents to tell them what's going on in writing" and "inviting parents to visit the class or attend school events displaying writing" were used. In addition, writing folders were sent home, along with notes and letters.

Photos served as one of the most effective records of writing events. Pictures of groups of children participating in writing activities were taken and showed those involved and the writing experience which had taken place. Pictures were used to motivate students and inform parents at the same time. Copies of photos were run off on ditto sheets and then made into books. The children added their own comments below the pictures. Each child received several photo writing booklets during the program which were useful in explaining and promoting writing.

The following actions were taken to provide opportunities for first graders to read and display their stories to extended audiences. The writer applied for and received a writing grant, made plans for children to read original stories throughout the school, promoted writing efforts through displays and newspaper exposure, and organized cooperative school wide writing activities.

The writer has 18 years experience teaching children in first grade. Throughout this time, she has come to realize the importance of perception in whether children were academically successful or not. With the current emphasis on literacy development, it was essential that children view themselves as capable writers very early in the educational process.

In an attempt to encourage literacy development in this school, the writer wrote a proposal for a mini-grant in the area of writing. Mini-grant programs were funded through both Chapter 2 of the Elementary and Secondary Act or through this county's Educational Foundation. The grants were intended to provide resources for teachers to supplement innovative projects to enhance individual programs and school climate. The intent of the program was to provide seed money to initiate new ideas, programs or projects that improved the quality of instruction.

The grant title,"Children's As Authors: Experiencing Literacy Development Through Writing, Sharing, and

Publication," coincided with writing activities in the process writing program implemented in the school. The Writing Exchange component of the program served as the vehicle through which literacy experiences were carried out. The purpose of the grant was to enhance the writing activities already in progress. For this reason, the writer acted to correlate the goals, activities, and evaluation with that of the writing program.

Grant funding paid for the cost of photos and processing, photo books, scrap books, display materials, journals and other writing materials. The grant thus helped by making funds available for the expansion of the existing program through promotion of writing activities. For example, grant funds allowed pictures to be taken of a larger number of children, which in turn increased interest in writing as more and more pictures were displayed. The writer assumed action in taking the pictures, having them processed, displaying them or placing them in the school photo book, or giving them to the children or teachers.

In addition to pictures, the display area was made more attractive through the purchase of bulletin board trim. Stars were the theme of all the displays and writing center areas. Grant money bought fluorescent poster board which was cut into stars of different sizes. The brightly colored stars were popular among children and teachers, and eventually their placement on the walls stood for a

designated writing display area.

Plans were made for children to read their original stories throughout the school. The writer met individually with the teachers who had writing centers in their room to discuss procedure. The best plan was "flexible reading time". Varying schedules did not allow a set time for children to visit other classrooms. The customary procedure was for a note or personal contact to verify whether or not a certain time was suitable. To initiate the idea, the writer walked with the youngsters until they were familiar with the location of classrooms. Sometimes a small group of children went to read, and on other occasions the entire class and teacher went. Children were reminded of correct behavior while in the building. School personnel became so accustomed to the writing traffic in the halls, that other adults helped assume responsibility of correcting inappropriate behavior. For the most part, the children were well behaved. Leaving the room to read their stories had become a coveted activity, and they usually did not jeopardize the privilege through misbehavior.

Students frequently invited guests to hear their stories in the classroom. Any person within sight was a possible listener. Once the custodian came to fix the sink, but could not leave until the children had read some stories to him. They escorted him to the room rocker where he sat in amazement as he heard tales of magic dragons

and personal experiences about loosing teeth. One little girl assured the guest and her peers that you could swallow a tooth and still get money because she had done it.

Extended audiences also included the cafeteria workers. Students in the writer's class took a tour of the lunchroom, wrote of the activity, and then wrote thank you letters to the workers. They decided to read the letters in person, so the helper for the day made arrangements with the supervisor for the class to read.

Students promoted their writing through reading, but their efforts were also promoted through displays and newspaper exposure. A large bulletin board in the hall was an excellent location for displays because all classes walked by this area on the way to school activities. Frequently classes waited near the board, which allowed time to look at the illustrations and read the stories.

The hall display was changed weekly, depending on the circumstances. School holidays or teacher workdays interrupted the consistency of the display being up from Monday through Friday, so the general rule was to keep the writing up no less than five consecutive school days, regardless of when they were. At times the board was shared by two or three classes, in which case more time was allowed.

Once the program started, teachers notified the writer of stories the children had completed and requested

placement on main bulletin board. At other times, children or school personnel contacted the writer about stories to be displayed. It was not unusual for the board to be 'booked' for several weeks in advance.

To accommodate for all the writing which could be displayed, permission was received to use the painted block walls as additional display areas. The halls were in addition to the pod bulletin areas and the classroom walls which were also used to display writing. Portable displays extended the writing displays into the county. Photos of children writing were mounted and taken to the front office, other schools, and the Superintendents office.

The public was given chances to either see literacy efforts at school functions or read about writing activities in the local paper. The writer was asked to display samples of writing on stage during the Science Fair program, and had placed a short notice inviting the public to see the display through the school Newsletter. In addition, visitors were reminded in the program handout to visit the writing exhibition on stage (Appendix I).

Being informed of other school functions was important. This was accomplished by keeping in contact with the PREP specialist who kept records of the school enrollment and was closely involved with personnel and teachers. Through her networking, the writer had the advantage of knowing what was going on within the school. For example, the

PREP specialist told the writer of the Volunteer Appreciation Day program which was to be held in the library and asked that illustrations and writing be displayed.

Through this means of cross communication, the writer planned for coming events which could be used to demonstrate the developmental stages of writing to the public. The specialist frequented the classrooms and was aware of supplies which could be used for the program. It was through her knowledge that extra bulletin boards were located, which became portable writing display boards.

The local paper was called on several occasions to take pictures of writing activities in the school. Copies of the articles were made and sent home to parents in the writer's classroom.

School wide writing activities such as Pen Pals and the Story Chain were organized to promote literacy development by giving children extended writing opportunities. In Pen Pals, students wrote to peers or adults. Teachers, cafeteria workers, assistants, coaches, the librarian, art teacher, and the principal all served as a pen pal to the children (Appendix J).

Pen Pals wrote notes daily for a week to two weeks at a time. A pen pal board was made for the convenience of the children in classes who were writing to their peers. Clothespins hanging from twine made holders for the notes. The clothespins hung under the classroom teacher's name.

The pen pal addressed the outside of the note to the friend and hung it from the clothespin adjacent to the teacher's name the receiver was in. Most of the children wrote notes daily to their pen pal and picked them up at recess.

Adult pen pals received their notes on their doors or in a convenient place in the room. A thick clear plastic insert sheet was cut in half and became a see through holder for the note. It had a large pencil on front drawn with permanent marker and Pen Pal printed on the pencil. The child could quickly see through the plastic container and know immediately if he or she had a note. The holder was attached to the door with tape.

A total of nine first grade classrooms exchanged pen pals. The program was voluntary and they children could drop out if they wanted to. They were instructed to write a note to their pen pal if they decided to quit. Many of the participants wrote thank you notes to the adults when writing time was up.

A child who did not receive a note for several days notified the writer who in turn assumed the responsibility for checking with the classroom teacher to see if the child was in school. On occasions when a child was out for a prolonged time, another pen pal was selected.

Experienced pen pals were appointed as assistants for new pen pals. They gave instructions to their peers as to where to get paper, leave notes, and what to do if

they did not receive a note. Any problems the assistant could not solve were directed to the teacher.

The pen pal board previously discussed was in the writer's pod area consisting of four first grade classrooms. An additional board was made for a second pod area, also of first graders. Children could become pen pals with any participating classrooms, regardless of location.

The children were reminded to ask questions about the message if they were not sure of the words or what the note meant. Temporary spelling was used. Teachers intervened if a note was suspicious. Students sometimes carried their new skills to extremes and some notes were found with bad words or suggestive actions. The procedure was not to reprimand or punish the child, but instead to assist the child in selecting more suitable words or thoughts. Notes were viewed as teaching opportunity in social skills as well as in writing.

Pen Pals gave excellent time for mini conference about phonics, grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and meaning. Usually the children needed help with some of the words, referring either to peers or the teacher. They seemed surprised that notes required something of them, often beginning the return note and totally ignoring any questions asked in the one just received. Teachers assumed responsibility of reminding the students to pick up or write notes, although this was seldom required.

The Story Chain originated in the writer's room primarily to maintain interest in writing through use of a variety of writing forms and paper. Strips used for the chain were cut from large sheets of art paper donated by the art teacher. The paper measured 6" by 18".

Children were instructed to write whatever they wanted to and illustrate the story with any material that suited them. The paper was unlined, which allowed the print to be any size. Some children defined their own areas for writing, printing the stories with a great deal of care and precision. Others boldly printed their stories with different colored markers or crayons.

Once the story was finished, the children read them to small groups of peers, or to the entire class. No corrections were made in the stories. The students stapled their own story strip onto the chain. Children wrote for the story chain whenever they had free time. This writing activity was in addition to regular writing time in the classroom.

The writer hung the chains from the hall ceiling. Twine was tied around the chain at the beginning, middle and end. Bent paper clips attached to the twine fastened the chain to metal strips in the ceiling. The chain was in sections, each section being about 15 or 20 chains, depending on how many stories were ready.

Children in other classrooms expressed their wish

to add to the chain. It was an impressive length by the first week. It's size and location drew a lot of attention. It was seen as a good activity to stimulate writing and could take the place of "worksheets" which were given when students finished their work.

The writer took advantage of the widespread interest in the project and used the opportunity to explain the purpose of the chain and invite others to participate. Curiosity from other teachers and a desire on the part of the children to join in increased as the chain traveled down the hallway.

Posters announced the coming of the chain. Fluorescent stars and signs preceded the chain, which by now had taken the form of a giant caterpillar. Students and teachers were told the chain was on the way to the library "where the rest of the author's are" and that there would be a celebration when the chain reached the entrance.

The author cut the paper for all classes in the project. The paper was left in one place, allowing children from the various rooms to get it as needed. Twine was provided to the teachers. Although the writer assisted some of the first grade teachers in hanging the chain, second grade teachers assumed that task themselves.

Once the chain got to the library, the principal suggested a photographer from the county paper take pictures of the chain (Appendix K).

The principal had a special interest in the chain. One of the children in the writer's room asked that the principal be given a story chain page, too. The suggestion was a good one. The child was sent to the office with a note asking if he would like to write. He returned later that day, story in hand. At the request of the students he read "I am really proud of the boys and girls who have worked so hard completing the story chain at N.W.E.S. This is the best story I know".

The following actions were taken to change the structure and pace of the writer's classroom in order to provide children with unstructured time to write daily on topics of their own selection. Changes in classroom management and the introduction of process writing were steps taken so that students could write with "voice, skill, and confidence" (Calkins, 1986, p. 47).

The suggestions of McDonald (1989) were used in the establishment of a supportive atmosphere for writing. The classroom was organized to facilitate a writing program by having a designated writing area. The writing center consisted of a table for six, shelves to store writing materials, and plants. A writing center sign hung from the ceiling while colorful stars decorated the wall. Writings could be hung on the wall, but writing was usually displayed on the bulletin boards on the north wall.

Children could use the area for group writing or

sharing stories. The table was also used as a resource table as children looked through magazines and books. Individual desks served as writing areas, along with a different style desk the children sometimes preferred to use for writing. A lap desk was available to the helper each day for writing, but could be assigned to a peer if the helper did not want to use it. It was taken to any area. The north bulletin board held most of the writing, and there was space for notes and photos. One area was used for writing brought to school from home, or letters and cards received during the year.

As a "rehearsal for writing" (Calkins, 1986, p. 50) drawing was introduced as framework for story writing. The pictures helped the children remember what they wanted to write. Drawing skills were taught using the method by Brooks (1988) which used lines and circles to make forms. The writer drew along with the children, using the chalk board and colored chalk. Attention was given to the basic shapes. The children followed along with their own sketches at their desk. The lesson was time consuming, but worth the effort. Children were reminded to find the same shapes in other drawing lessons. Drawing time was usually worked in with the reading lesson, using one of the scenes in the children's reading book.

The drawing time allowed the class to gain experience in developing their drawing skills which were used in their

own original illustrations. They were assisted by calling attention to previous drawing lessons, but never by direct intervention on their papers. The writer served as model in both drawing and writing lessons, allowing the children to witness the thinking involved as parts of a picture were erased and drawn again or stories were changed. Talking while drawing or writing gave the message that mistakes can happen and changes be made.

Invented spelling was the foundation of the process writing classroom because it freed children to write. Notes and journal entries were written using invented spelling. Students were encouraged to write using the skills they already had, and that "concern for spelling belonged in the final stage of the writing process" (Calkins, 1986, p. 64).

Writing began first thing in the morning every day. A writing folder was used to hold the topic sheet, rough drafts, and final copy. Each writing attempt was dated. Children used a variety of paper, both lined and unlined. Some children added on to stories by taping an extra paper to the story they were writing if there was more to tell.

Writing lasted for about an hour, which included a brief mini-lesson, quiet time for writing, conferences, and listening to stories. "Sustained silent writing time" (Turbill, 1989, p. 19) was useful in allowing children to gather their thoughts.

Students read from a bright green chair. The art teacher printed "Author's Chair" on the back along with a huge pencil. The chair was shared among the four classes in the pod. It was placed on the counter at the wet area, and authors returned the chair after use. Pictures were taken of children reading their stories while sitting in the chair.

Peer learning was a valuable part of the writing program. As questioning techniques became familiar to the writers, they assisted each other in editing stories. Small groups worked informally together. At other times the whole class interacted to discuss a story.

Literature was used to reinforce the writing program. Library books, Fairy Tales, Newspapers, and Magazines were read daily. The writer sat in the class rocking chair and read after the children came in from physical education. Literature time usually lasted at least half an hour. Sometimes the stories of the children were read too, depending on whether they had already been heard. Frequent references were made to connect topics or themes in the children's writing with that in the book. The students were given opportunities to question and comment.

The students used the rocker, too. It became a favorite place to sit and read to a friend. It was used for writing many times as well. As the year went by, the designated writing area became the whole room.

By spring, the writing folders were full so the children began writing in a journal purchased with grant money. Journal writing followed the same schedule as before, except the stories were much longer and more time was necessary to hear all of the stories. Reading the journal, as with reading any stories, was voluntary. The children were eager to sit in the Author's Chair and read their entries.

One child was shy, and would only read his stories to the writer or friends. Occasionally he would ask to read to the whole class. The class was comfortable in being able to make their own decisions about reading. The students were encouraged to hear each other's stories, as "Some of the most successful instruction occurs in school when children help each other" (Smith, 1986, p. 184). Peer help came in many forms. Sometimes friends listened, at other times they helped with spelling or reminding a student to date the journal entry.

Illustrations in the journal were optional, and by the end of the year less and less drawings were seen along with the stories. While the drawings served to "inspire students to write" (Lowderbaugh, 1984, p.1) when they were first learning to develop new skills and express ideas, the illustrations were no longer needed as a starting point for writing. Children continued to have the option of drawing throughout the program.

The most significant deviation from proposal plans was the inclusion of a Writing/Drawing component. The lab consisted of artistically talented children K-2 who met with the art teacher once a week to draw and write stories about their illustrations.

The writer realized the inclusion of this component would be time consuming and that justification for adding to proposal plans would be expected in the report. The background of the talented youngsters is that during the 1989-90 school year, the writer implemented a program for artistically skilled children. "Art Works '89" gave students with extraordinary drawing talent time to draw during the school day. Their productions were promoted by displaying their pictures on a centrally located hall bulletin board.

Although improvements in drawing can be made through instruction and practice, few children have the skill to reproduce mental images with such creativity and joy as this group of youngsters. They drew for the love of drawing, their only incentive being sheer desire.

The artists became well known not only within the school, but in the community as well (Appendix L). A three day art festival gave hundreds of children, school and county personnel, and guest the privilege of seeing a display of the total drawings accomplished throughout the program. Their talent also got the attention of a renown

artist and sculptor, who is presently displaying a collective picture of work in his hand made castle. According to his guest book, visitors from all over the United States have enjoyed a sample of what young children are capable of doing in art.

The writer believed that in a society pulled by drugs, abuse, neglect, and mobility, something stable was needed, something beautiful. The pictures of the artists exemplified hope that there was more to life than the outside forces which often confuse and confront people. They drew magnificent pictures of humanity, of who we are and what we long to be.

As an introduction to the pictures on display at the art festival, the writer posted the following.

> Welcome--to the world of art, where grass is purple and crayons dance; where snakes have wings and cobalt eyes, and copper fish with metallic tails explore the oceans of your mind. Experience images on paper; fire and water, earth and sky, golden doors and clear glass hills. Absorb pictures of life; soft music, and Easter egg hunts, rescues, monsters, weddings and dance. Pictures of you. And me. (Cathcart, 1989).

One of the guests described the illustrations as being "Awesome". If the drawings and stories of kindergarten, first and second grade children have such a stirring affect

now, imagine the impact of these youngsters as adults if they continue their craft. If society could show an appreciation for their talent now, perhaps the young artists would repay those efforts when they are grown with paintings and sculpture and more magnificent pictures of humanity.

The writer saw the time to act as being the present. It was intended the art lab would give the children fond memories of using their talent, and more firmly bond them to what Joseph Campbell called a person's "bliss, the possibility within" (Flowers, 1986).

Actions were taken to include the Writing/Drawing lab in the program by setting up a time schedule with the art teacher and contacting the "Art Works '89" group. Other students were referred to the program by classroom teachers or the art teacher. Thirteen children K-2 took home a letter about the program and a permission slip to participate in the program (Appendix M & N).

Productions from the Writing/Drawing lab were located on a large bulletin board in the library. Photos were taken of the children and displayed along with their craft. Pictures taken during lab time were copied on ditto sheets in order to give the students a record of their lab experiences.

The writer was responsible for gathering materials such as objects to be drawn or live models, and for keeping the lab activities running smoothly. Brief meetings with

the art teacher several times a week was adequate in keeping both informed of how the lab sessions were progressing and if any changes were necessary. The art teacher guided the children in drawing, while the author assisted with writing.

Two other changes were made which contributed to the effectiveness of the program. The first change was the use of the word "temporary" spelling rather than "invented" spelling. The writer agreed that "temporary described nonstandard spelling more realistically and didn't carry the negative connotations" (Cambourne & Turbill, 1989, p. 24). Use of the word "invented" implied children were making up the spelling without any direction, skill, or pattern. "Temporary" spelling could be explained as "emerging written language which was a developmental process like emerging oral language" (Hoffman & McCully, 1984, p. 49). Nonstandard spelling was a stage in writing.

The second change was the location of the writing center in the author's classroom. Quiet writing time was done at individual desks, but the writing center itself outgrew its location. Children were writing on the floor and under furniture, at tables and in the rocking chair. Youngsters were writing with friends or alone with the lap desk. When large spaces for writing were needed, tables were pulled together. The Writing Center sign was taken down and hung above the entrance to the classroom.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

Schools, as architectural buildings, speak of an attitude toward children, an attitude toward the purpose of education. Schools talk. Walls covered with original stories sing of meaningful writing experiences. Classrooms with writing centers hum of imaginations, alive on paper. Schools shout, and if they shout only the transmission of factual knowledge, rote learning, and repeated practice, they shout away the voice of authorship in writing.

Kremer (1987) reminds us that recent research demonstrates what "common sense should have been telling us all along; children learn to read by reading and they learn to write by writing, and the more they read and write, the more proficient they become in both disciplines" (p.66). Very little writing was evidenced in this elementary school. Traditional methods of writing instruction were not effective in meeting the developmental needs of first grade children. In order for these needs to be met, children were given control of their writing, classroom management was altered, and attitudes changed. Children were

given opportunities for creative expression through a non traditional approach to writing. The developmental needs of students were realized through meeting four goals.

The first goal of changing the character of first grade writing instruction so that emphasis was properly placed upon content and stimulating the imagination rather than on the mechanics was met through the establishment of writing centers in first grade classrooms.

The evaluation tool was the number of first grade classes which established writing centers, with successful achievement being no less than four rooms would have writing centers. Six first grade classrooms, including the writer's had writing centers for the year. In addition, four second grade classes maintained centers as well. Ten writing centers were established.

Inservice began with two teachers at the beginning of school. Within a few weeks, the number included three more first grade teachers and four second grade teachers. The Mid Evaluation of Writing Centers-Inservice (Appendix O) asked teachers to briefly respond to an open ended questionnaire. Four first grade teachers and one second grade teacher returned the questionnaire.

Teachers responded that they were not having difficulty establishing the writing centers. Three teachers, however, asked for additional inservice which was given. The remaining three teachers stated they were not having

any difficulties. Five of the six teachers answered that the children were responding enthusiastically to the writing activity. All of the teachers said the writing center was fitting in well with the other subject areas they were teaching. The second grade teacher added the writing center had been incorporated with reading, spelling, language, and social studies.

Teachers responded they wanted inservice to continue as it had been carried out from the beginning. The Mid Evaluation of Writing Centers-Inservice was helpful in giving a cumulative view of inservice procedure. Generally, inservice was conducted on an individual basis through informal conversation. It was through brief discussions in doorways, halls, or at lunch that the writer was able to continually monitor the progress of the writing center.

While the previous questionnaire dealt with inservice, the Mid Evaluation of Writing Centers asked teachers to respond to a Likert scale item questionnaire as to how they agreed or disagreed with statements about the writing center in their classrooms (Appendix P). Five first grade teachers and one second grade teacher responded to the evaluation. Four teachers strongly agreed that children were allowed to select their own topic at a specific area defined as the writing center, while two teachers agreed that this was true for the most part. All respondents said the children were encouraged to use temporary spelling.

Two classes wrote every day, while the other four wrote nearly every day. All of the teachers said the writings were published, although in different degrees. Writing centers were considered an important part of the curriculum, as was evidenced by answers on the questionnaire.

Comments on the evaluation by the respondents included observations that children were more aware of sentence structure and mechanics. There was also a noticeable improvement in punctuation skills such as the use of question marks and periods.

Writing center activities overlapped with writing activities throughout the school, such as those occurring in the Writer's Exchange. For this reason, the two areas were combined to make the Evaluation of Writer's Exchange and Classroom Writing Center (Appendix Q). Nine first grade teachers, four second grade teachers, the art teacher, and the librarian answered a closed item checklist with multiple selections concerning program effectiveness.

Three of the eight first grade teachers did not have a writing center in the room but did participate in many of the writing activities such as Pen Pals, the Story Chain, Notes, and classroom writing. Four of the five first grade teachers checked all items in the first part of the evaluation. The 13 items included observations such as children being more aware of sequencing, an improvement in sentence structure, enthusiasm for writing, an increase

in writing, vocabulary expansion, willingness to express ideas verbally, teachers sharing ideas about writing, more public interest in writing, and more attention paid to writing in general.

Second grade teachers with writing centers noted similar observations in the same above areas. Positive results were also indicated by the three first grade rooms who participated in writing but did not have writing centers.

The opinions of the librarian and art teacher were valued because they worked with all of the school children and could give a broad view of program effectiveness. In addition, both teachers worked directly with the writing program. The art teacher directed the Writing/Drawing lab while the librarian read lab stories to library classes as they waited for their teachers to pick them up. Both teachers contributed to the success of the program.

The librarian checked observations in all 13 areas of the first part of the evaluation. She "stared" two items which she said were especially significant. Her first observation was an increase in self-esteem throughout the school. Children took pride in their stories which was shown by their willingness to read them to others. Her second observation was the increase in teachers sharing ideas about writing.

The art teacher made similar observations. She

commented the program had started a "chain reaction" of writing as teachers were encouraged to participate in the various writing activities.

In answer to what this school could do to increase writing, all 15 respondents checked teachers sharing writing activities. There was also an interest in displaying writing in community stores.

The third area of the evaluation gave a strong endorsement for the writing activity which involved children taking home a stuffed animal, writing in a journal about the experience, and reading the entry at school. Four classrooms had used this activity, and all four teachers said the class enjoyed it over writing stories or Pen Pals. It should be noted that the question was applicable to those who had used all three writing ideas, but other teachers answered it as well. Teachers whose classes had not used the animal selected classroom story writing as being the most popular activity.

The goal of providing children with extended writing opportunities using a variety of writing forms and a variety of audiences was met through the initiation of a Home Writing plan in the writer's first grade classroom.

Results were analyzed from artifacts of the various writing forms which gave information as to the degree of writing interest and progress of the children. The evaluation tool was the number of children taking home a stuffed animal, writing about the experience, and then reading the journal entry in class. Success achievement was considered to be all of the children would participate.

Results were also determined from a Mid Evaluation of the Home Writing program using a Likert scale closed item questionnaire. Parents responded to statements by circling the number on the scale which showed the extend to which they agreed or disagreed. All 19 forms were returned (Appendix R). It should be noted that class enrollment changed frequently due to the migrant population in this area. For this reason, references to the total number of children may differ from one evaluation form to another.

Most of the respondents strongly agreed that there had been a noticeable increase in writing since the home activity began. Eighteen respondents said they would like for the program to continue, expressed an interest in a parent handbook on writing, and that Ramble had been an

enjoyable writing experience for their child which they would like to see repeated. Fifteen said their child had shown an interest in having a writing center at home. Two parents penciled in that their child did have an area for writing.

A visual method of analysis (Table 1) showed the number of children involved in the program and the variety of writing forms attempted. Twenty one students, the total class enrollment at that time, participated in the Ramble Home Writing experience. Seven children were Holiday Writers, while 13 students brought back the March Packet. All of the students were Pen Pals, and all wrote notes.

The writer kept up with the number of days children were writing notes over a 30 day period. Results showed children to be writing notes with regularity, most of them writing at least one note a day. Two boys only wrote three notes each during that time. The total number of notes written during the 30 days was more than 375, as some children wrote more than one note daily. They had been asked to only mark the day any note was written, so the count is higher. In addition to 30 individual note cards with pictures, the writer cut paper for 1,000 notes which was all used during program implementation. Approximately 200 notes were written to the teacher during the program. Each note was answered on the day it was received.

In order to prepare materials for the Summer Writing

Table 1

Number of Children, Stories, and Variety of Writing

Over 900 stories were written in the writing folders from November 27 until March 22. Over 700 stories were written in journals from March until May 29, 1990.

	101	97	104	71	87	87	100	85	102	94	50	80	73	130	86	123	60	68	50	45	47
Student	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Holiday Writers	x	x		x				x		x								x	x		
March Packet	x	x	x	x			x	x	x		x	x	x	x				x			
Pen Pals	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ramble Raccoon	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Writing Folders	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Journals	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Notes	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Notes to Writer	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Summer Writing	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Summer Letter		x	x	x			x											x			

activities, parents were asked on the Mid Evaluation if they would like for their child to be given writing materials for the summer months and if they would return a survey of the writing program in a self-addressed stamped envelope. Eighteen parents requested the summer writing materials and agreed to return the survey.

At the time of this report, three parents had returned the Evaluation of Home Writing Program (Appendix S). Letters from six children were received. The writer tried to reach the remaining children by phone. Four students did not have a phone, two were not at home, and six had moved. The writer spoke with one child downtown who said he had lost the papers.

Results from the letters and evaluations were positive. The six children said they enjoyed the Summer Writing activities and wanted to continue writing in school next year. The letters written showed continued writing skill improvement. The students were still using temporary spelling along with standard. The letters were interesting, mostly telling what they had done during vacation time.

Parents commented that their children were doing well in writing and liked the materials. One parent commented that she was very proud of her son's literacy development and another said she was happy with her daughter's writing confidence in first grade. Although the response was limited in number, parents viewed the writing as successful.

The third goal of providing opportunities for first graders to read and display their stories to extended audiences was met through the Writer's Exchange Program. The evaluation tool was the number of classes participating in the program, with no less than ten considered a success. Results were determined through analysis of two evaluations, interviews, photos, and observation.

Six teachers responded to the Mid Evaluation of the Writer's Exchange (Appendix T) concerning program effectiveness. Teachers were asked to make selections about writing participation, interest, publication, and problems. It was important to know if children were exposed to a "variety of audiences and purposes in order to become competent writers" (Bean & Bouffler, 1987, p.22).

Teachers checked they had notices an increase in the number and kinds of stories written and that children were writing independently without being prompted. Children also showed interest in writing by commenting about the publications in the hall. Three of the teachers said their children asked to write frequently and talked about writing to others.

Results also showed students enjoyed reading their stories to peers and having their writing displayed more than sitting in the Author's Chair or having photos taken.

The teachers all agreed that publication by reading original stories and displaying them had helped them

in their recognition of writing development in young children and had been a meaningful experience for the students.

Four of the six teachers did not indicate any problems concerning the Writer's Exchange Program. Two teachers did express difficulty in the amount of time involved in writing and scheduling to read to other classes. All of the respondents felt the program should be continued, and three teachers said the pace of the program should stay the same. Five first grade teachers and one second grade teacher answered the Mid Evaluation of the Writer's Exchange.

Results from the final Evaluation of the Writer's Exchange have been previously discussed with reference to writing centers (Appendix Q). The Exchange program was successful in involving a large number of children in writing. They became less inhibited in literacy attempts and showed increasing enthusiasm about writing.

School wide writing involvement was determined by log entries and 14 interviews with teachers most directly involved with the program. A total of 25 classrooms did general writing, while 17 of these rooms practiced reading stories to peers. Twelve rooms read to extended audiences. Ten rooms had writing centers, while only one room had daily journal writing. Further promotion was given through bulletin boards, both in the room and other areas.

Seventeen classrooms used bulletin boards in the room to promote writing, while 13 also used the main bulletin board or library bulletin board for displays. Nine rooms kept a scrap book or photo album for writing. Eighteen classrooms participated in the Story Chain activity, and 11 rooms had children which exchanged pen pals. Seven classes used the note writing idea.

By grade level, three kindergarten classes, nine first grade classes, and nine second grade classes were involved in the Writer's Exchange Program. Two tutorial classes were also included.

Teachers agreed that photographs had been helpful in promoting the writing of elementary children and that pictures taken of the writing activities in progress had been a factor in motivating children to write.

Pictures functioned as data (Appendix U) to analyze results of the Writer's Exchange. Pictures taken of the displays in the hall and library served as visual representation of program projects. Pictures of Pen Pals, note sharing, children visiting other rooms and reading stories, and photos of children writing for the Story Chain all added to giving information about the program.

Pictures were also taken to focus attention on a particular event which could be used as a stimulus for writing. Many writing activities stemmed from providing pictures of real life happenings. For example, photos

taken at the Lakeland Fly In served to create interest in writing and reading about planes. It also provided valuable information as to whether process writing has an impact on children being willing to take risks in writing. The children saw the plane pictures on the main bulletin board and drew pictures and wrote stories about planes during library time. The librarian used a week to read books about planes during library class time. The illustrations were then displayed in the library.

The interest derived from this activity through the use of photos was further evidenced by the request of children to borrow the pictures in order to take them to the classroom for additional writing. Children could be seen crowded around the hall bulletin board the whole week the plane pictures were up.

The writer asked the librarian to send her stories the children had written in all three grades. At random, she sent stories from four first grade classrooms, four second grade classrooms, and one kindergarten. An analysis of pictures and stories (Appendix V) resulted in information concerning the willingness of children to take risks in writing (Table 2) and (Appendix W).

Writing Centers were in two of the first grade classes and two of the second grade classes. Classes 1A, 1C, 2B, 2C, and K did not have writing centers. In these classes, illustrations outnumbered story attempts. Children

Table 2

"Plane" Stories Risk-Takers K-2

Grade level	Picture drawn	Story written	Temporary spelling	Writing center	Some writing activities
1A	17	8	no	no	no
1B	23	17	yes	yes	yes
1C	20	4	no	no	yes
1D	22	10	yes	yes	yes
2A	8	4	yes	yes	yes
2B	16	6	no	no	no
2C	14	1	no	no	no
2D	18	11	yes	yes	yes
K	22	0	no	no	no

Children who had experience in writing using temporary spelling were greater risk takers in writing a story to go with an illustration than children who did not use temporary spelling and who did not have a variety of experiences in writing.

wrote stories used standard spelling. The sentences were short and unimaginative compared with the stories of children who had been exposed to process writing, used temporary spelling and were comfortable with writing. Children in rooms 1B, 1D, 2A, and 2D clearly took risks in writing that children in the other classes would not take. The writer's class was not included in this evaluation.

Results of the Writer's Exchange were also analyzed from comments of school personnel, parents, children, and visitors. For example, the public was invited to see the process writing display at the Third Annual Elementary Science Fair (Appendix I). The Writer's Exchange program displayed favorite stories and correspondence written by students in first and second grade who had shared their products with extended audiences. A table was set up with paper and pencils, along with a brief explanation of the program. Comments such as "Keep writing" and "I never knew kids could write like this" showed public interest in the literacy development of children.

Writing activities such as the Story Chain resulted in promoting the literacy efforts of youngsters through articles in the county paper (Appendix K). Approximately 500 stories made up the paper chain which was estimated at being over 450 feet long. This writing activity, according to the newspaper article, had "opened the students

eyes to the marvel of writing".

The Pen Pal program was equally successful. Students not only received experience writing in real life situations, they had the opportunity to develop friendships with peers and adults as well. The writer assisted the children in reading the notes and therefore was able to observe the progress of Pen Pals through the correspondence. Not only did the children benefit from the experience, but the adult Pen Pals told the writer they "really got to know the children". Through this writing activity, student-teacher relationships improved along with writing skills.

Three kindergarten classes participated in the Writer's Exchange program by having their drawings displayed on the main bulletin board. One of the kindergarten teachers had begun writing with her class after some of the writer's children read stories to the group. After the children had drawn pictures, the teacher wrote their stories as the children dictated them. All of the children had something to say about the meaning behind what they had drawn (Appendix X). These prewriting experiences encouraged the children to continue writing. The class went with the writer to display their stories and have photos taken. The children spoke very little English and the writer spoke no Spanish, but the message was clear that writing was fun.

The fourth goal of providing children with unstructured time to write daily on topics of their own selection was met through the establishment of a process writing classroom. The evaluation tool was the amount of time spent in process writing per week with success being no less than 30 minutes daily for at least four days. Results were analyzed by the writer's log which recorded observations and classroom activities regularly throughout the program. The number and variety of writing attempts were evidenced in the writing folders and journals. Results were compiled (Table 1) for easy reading. The teacher plan book showed the amount of time spent in writing exceeded that of 30 minutes a day for four days.

Children wrote daily for up to an hour. Usually the time spent in writing was 45 minutes a day. This writing was story writing from the folders and journal writing. It did not include counting other writing activities which have been previously mentioned.

Children wrote daily from November through March, using the writing folder to store the entries. In April and May, the journals were used for writing. During this time, each entry was dated. Dating the stories made it possible to evaluate the progression of literacy development and determine the amount of experience the children were getting in writing. Gunderson & Shapiro (1988) pointed out that "Dating writing products was important because

it provided an accurate record of growth" (p. 437). Dating stories also helped in determining the number of stories written, as many entries by the end of the program were several pages long.

It was estimated over 1,600 stories were written from November through May. The entries of several children were not counted because they moved to another area. A lot of time was spent in writing. Any attempt at writing counted as a story. Some stories were only a few words at the beginning of the year. Other stories were three or four pages long.

Students began with illustration (Appendix Y) which helped them to organize their thoughts and remember what they were going to say. As writing skills developed, the children relied less and less on drawing. By the end of the year, the illustrations served a different purpose. Drawings were used to place emphasis on the story, rather than for assistance in recall.

An analysis of the large amount of stories showed the children were exercising the freedom to write about anything. Some stories were written about the child's physical condition while others told of future events or past experiences. Many references were to the writing program itself, and gave excellent feedback from the children as to how the program was going (Appendix Y).

Journal writing samples showed the individual themes

and personal choice of subject matter. As Bean & Bouffler (1988) had warned "Journal writing should be personal and not turned into a school literacy exercise" (p. 22). The fourth goal had stressed allowing children to write on topics of their own selection. The variety of topics and personal entries evidenced that this goal had been realized.

Themes were frequently repeated over and over, showing a progression of thought and the ability to expand an original idea (Appendix Z). By allowing students to write on subjects of interest and concern to them personally, they were able to express feelings and solve problems over a period of time. One child, for example, wrote about a pet dog. One of his first entries in November was about seeing his dog. Another story in February told of the death of the dog, while the last in April told of his receiving another pet. Significant, personal accounts in the lives of the students were given importance through their own means of expression.

Writing was also found to improve self-esteem as was seen in the analysis of notes and journal entries. Social problems were addressed and children improved in interpersonal relationship skills by writing about their problems. For example, one child wrote a note to the teacher which said "Ms. 'C', No Btite like me" (Nobody likes me). The writer used notes to encourage the child

and assist her in making friends. She did, in fact, become popular. Her change in self-esteem was seen in one of her last journal entries in which she wrote "I am happy, Ms. 'C'".

Conclusions

The process writing program was successful not only in reaching practicum goals, but did much to prepare children for life in a society where, according to Aburdene & Naisbitt (1985), the only constant is change.

Young authors experienced the joy of transforming letters of the alphabet into meaningful communication. They discovered the power of words to change. Through notes and stories, children made things change. Directly, through words, they made requests and got results, persuaded and had needs met, shared sadness and were comforted. They wrote, and the more they wrote the more exposed they were to change and the more they learned to be comfortable with changing.

In reading well over 1,600 stories of first grade children, the writer is convinced that children can know the power of words at a very young age. They can experience through writing that "words are eggs, that words carry life, that words give birth" (Lockhart, 1983, p.122).

Schools do talk. This elementary school speaks of

changes in the character of first grade writing instruction. Changes such as providing children with extended writing instruction, publishing their stories, and giving them time to write daily on topics of their own selection were evident throughout the school.

Teachers noticed the change in students and the change in their writing. They bragged about the children's stories and were impressed with the enthusiasm shown in writing. They saw the risks the writers were taking because of the freedom to use temporary spelling. They noticed the expanded vocabulary, details, and creativity.

Parents commented on the change, too. Their children were writing at home and liking it. They wrote notes to the parents and got answers back in lunch boxes. They wrote stories at home and took them to school to read, and wrote stories at school and took them home. Parents told other parents, and by the end of the school year, the image of first graders as young "authors" was well established both at home and school.

The public noticed the change, too. Through verbal communication, writing displays, and the county paper, people in the community became aware of what students could do with pencil and paper, using their own words.

In conclusion, this practicum did bring about a significant change in writing instruction in this school.

Gow (1989) quotes Russell Kirk as saying the "primary purpose of a liberal education is the cultivation of the person's own intellect and imagination, for the person's own sake" (p. 545). Allowing children to write creatively not only cultured their intellect and imagination, it gave them voice in their own education.

Recommendations

The writer recommends three things to anyone wanting to duplicate this program.

1. Train volunteers to help with story editing, making books, and publication.
2. Increase community awareness of the abilities of young children to write by scheduling community groups and organizations to visit the school and hear the stories.
3. Make a booklet about temporary spelling to be given to administrators, teachers, and parents. Offer to give inservice about temporary spelling.

Dissemination

Plans for dissemination include offering assistance to anyone wanting to begin a process writing program, helping teachers with writing centers, and beginning a pre-writing program with kindergarten teachers. Plans also include providing the library with lists of books on writing from well known writing authorities and reminding teachers of the availability of writing research in our school. The writing photo album will serve as visual assistance in ideas for writing activities. The writer intends to continue with process writing in her own classroom and to encourage others in this non-traditional approach to writing instruction.

Reference List

Aburdene, P., & Naisbitt, J. (1985). Re-inventing the corporation. New York: Warner Books, Inc.

Atwell, N. (1989). Writing workshop. American Educator, 13, pp. 14-21.

Banderjee, S. (1990, May). Writing a personal letter has become a lost art. The Tampa Tribune, p. 1F.

Barton, B. (1986). Tell me another. Ontario: Pembroke Publishers Limited, 24.

Bean, W. & Bouffler, C. (1987). Spell by writing. Pourtsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc.

Bettelheim, B. (1981). In D. Elkind, The hurried child. Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Bingham, A. (1988). Using writing folders to document student progress. In N. Atwell, T. Newkirk, (Eds.), Understanding Writing. Portsmouth: N.H.: Heineman Education Books, Inc. 216-225.

Bollenbach, C. (1986). Comprehension. The Journal of Creative Behavior, 20.

Brooks, M. (1988). Art by the alphabet. Principal, 67, pp. 15-18.

Bridge. S.B. (1988). Squeezing from the middle of the tube. In N. Atwell, T. Newkirk, (Eds.), Understanding Writing: Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc. 80-87.

Buttery, T.J. & Reitzammer, A.F. (1987). Creative writing: a story of selected story stimuli on second grade children. Reading Improvement, 24, 262-266.

Cadieux, S. (1988). Letting children lead the way. In N. Atwell, T. Newkirk, (Eds.), Understanding Writing. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Education Books, Inc, 76-79.

Calkins, L.M. (1986). The art of teaching writing. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc.

Cambourne, B. & Turbill, J. (1989). Coping with chaos. Maryborough, Vic.: Australian Print Group.

Chiseri-Strater, E. (1988). Reading to Mr. Bear. In N. Atwell & T. Newkird, (Eds.), Understanding Writing. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc.

Clay, M. (1988). Exploring with a pencil. Reading Today. p. 15.

Cole, R.W. (1987). Who is accountable for thoughtfulness? Kappan, 69, 49-52.

D'Ambrosio, V. (1988). Second-graders can so write. In N. Atwell & T. Newkirk, (Eds.), Understanding Writing. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc., 53-61.

Dubos, R. (1968). So human an animal. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 171, 176.

Durst, S.S. (1988). Oscar's journey. In N. Atwell & T. Newkirk, (Eds.), Understanding Writing. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc.

Educational Newswatch. (1988). Arizona limits first grade testing. Teaching K-8, 19, 8.

Elkind, D. (1981). The hurried child. Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company. 82-83.

Flowers, B.S. (Ed.). (1988). The power of myth. New York: Doubleday.

Floyd, B. & Floyd, D. (1988). A tale of two cultures. Principal, 67, 42.

Gentry, J.R. (1987). Spel...is a four letter word. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc.

Giacobbe, M.E. (1988). Choosing a language arts textbook. In N. Atwell, T. Newkirk, (Eds.), Understanding Writing. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books. 256-258.

Giff, P.R. (1987). A writer who believes in reading. Teaching K-8, 17, 35.

Gow, H.B. (1989). The true purpose of education. Kappan, 70, pp. 545-546.

Graves, D.H. (1983). Writing: teachers and children at work. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc. 7, 43, 54, 83, 92, 268, 244.

Gunderson, L. & Shapiro, J. (1988). Whole language instruction: writing in first grade. The Reading Teacher, 41, pp. 430-437.

Handbook for planning an effective writing program K-12. (HPEWP). California State Department of Education. pp. 1-10, 41-50.

Herzog, E. (1983). Psyche and death. Dallas: Spring Publication, Inc.

Hillerich, R.L. (1987). Not just a picture book. Teaching K-8, 17. pp. 24-26.

Hoffman, S. & McCully, B. (1984). Oral language functions in transaction with children's writing. Language Arts, 61, pp. 41-50.

Jalongo, M.R. & Zeigler, S. (1987). Writing in kindergarten and first grade. Childhood Education, 64, 97-104.

Johnson, K.B. & Johnson S. (1986). Getting ready to write: creating stories in the classroom. Early Years, pp. 104-107.

Karelitz, E.B. (1988). Notewriting: A neglected genre. In N. Atwell, T. Newkirk, (Eds.), Understanding Writing. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educatiional Books, Inc. 88-113.

Kremer, D.L. (1987, April). The unquiet classroom. Teaching K-8, pp. 66-69.

Lamme, L.L. (1982). Take time to let children write. Children Our Concern, 7, 7-8.

Lockhart, R.A. (1983). Words as eggs. Dallas, Texas: Spring Publication, Inc.

Lowderbaugh, T.E. (1984). Making sense; writing from objects, a Smithsonian approach. Smithsonian Institute. Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. pp 1-6.

Martin, A. (1985). Storytelling in kindergarten. Teachers & Writers, 16, 9-12.

McDonald, R. (---) (Ed.). Managing a classroom writing and reading program. Excerpted from the Elementary Writing Guide. Department of Instructional Services, Fairfax, Virginia. p. 101.

McPike, E. (Ed.). (1989). In N. Atwell, Writing workshop. American Educator, 13, 17.

Meagher, J. (1986). The making of a first grade writer. Instructor, pp. 37-39.

Nathan, R. (1989). Setting up a writing program. In Juntunen, K., Nathan, R., Temple, C., Temple, F. Classroom Strategies That Work. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc. 16, 25, 57.

Patterson, B.H. (1986). Creativity and androgony. The Journal of Creative Behavior, 20, 20, 99-109.

Peck, C.F. (1986). Science & poetry writing in the elementary school. Teachers and Writers, 18. 11-13.

Pinnell, G. (1989). A systems approach to reducing the risk of reading failure. In J.B. Allen, J. Mason, (Eds.), Risk Makers, Risk Takers, Risk Breakers. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc. 182.

Raymond, A. (1988). Postcards and peace vigils. Teaching K-8, 19. 42.

Reed, B. (1987). Storytelling: what it can teach. School Library Journal, 34, 35-39.

Reinehr, F. (1987). Storyteaching. Teachers & Writers, 18, 1-7.

Robertson, S.M. (1982). Rosegarden and labrinth. Dallas: Spring Publication. XIX.

Rogers, C.R. (1965). In T.W. Wann (Ed.), Behaviorism and Phenomenology. (pp. 109-112). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Rynkofs, J.T. (1988). Send your writing folders home. In N. Atwell, T. Newkirk, (Eds.). Understanding Writing. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc. 226-235.

Smith, F. (1983). Smith's myths. Essays Into Literacy. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc. 1-4.

Smith, F. (1986). Insult to intelligence. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc.

Smith, F. (1989). Overselling literacy. Kappan, 70, 353-359.

Sowers, S. (1988). Six questions teachers ask about invented spellling. In N. Atwell, T. Newkirk, (Eds.), Understanding Writing. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc. 62-68.

Strickland, D. & Taylor, D. (1989). Learning from families: implications for educators and policy. In J.B. Allen, J. Mason, (Eds.), Risk Makers, Risk Takers, Risk Breakers. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc.

Suransky, V.P. (1982). The erosioin of childhood. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Teale, W.H. (1989). Assessing young children's reading and writing. Reading Today.

Temple, C. (1989). Focused lessons. In K. Juntunen, R. Nathan, C. Temple, F. Temple, Classroom Strategies That Work. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc. 71.

Turbill, J. (Ed.), (1982). Getting started. No Better Way To Teach Writing. Portsmouth N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc. 16-33.

Turbill, J. (1989). Now,we want to write. Maryborough, Vic.: Australian Print Group. 15, 19, 46, 69.

Vogotsky, (L986). In A. Skolnick, The psychology of human development. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Williamson, R.A. (1984). Living the sky: the cosmos of the American Indian. Boston: Massachusetts. Houghton Mifflin Company. 314.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
TABLE OF CONTENTS		iii
LIST OF TABLES		v
ABSTRACT		vi
Chapter		
I	INTRODUCTION	1
	Description of Work Setting and Community	1
	Writer's Work Setting and Role	3
II	STUDY OF THE PROBLEM	8
	Problem Description	8
	Problem Documentation	9
	Causative Analysis	12
	Relationship of the Problem to the Literature	13
III	ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS	30
IV	SOLUTION STRATEGY	38
	Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions	38
	Description of Selected Solution	41
	Report of Action Taken	50
V	RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	84
	Results	84
	Conclusions	104
	Recommendations	106
	Dissemination	107
REFERENCES		108
Appendices		113
A.	WRITING SURVEY FOR GRADES K-2	114
B.	WRITING SURVEY FOR GRADES K-2, INDIVIDUAL VIEWS AND CLASSROOM PRACTICES	116

APPENDIX A

WRITING SURVEY FOR GRADES K-2

Writing Survey Grades K-2

This survey relates to problems sometimes encountered in process writing (not mechanical aspects of writing). Please check areas which you consider most likely to interfere with writing instruction in the grade you teach.

7 Kindergarten 10 First 5 Second

1. 15 Writing curriculum not available.
2. 8 Process writing not considered necessary for this grade level.
3. 4 Class size too large.
4. 9 Teacher training did not include writing instruction in process writing.
5. 9 Focus on required subjects (reading & math) leaves little time for consistent instruction in process writing.
6. 17 Children are not developmentally ready to receive instruction in process writing.
7. 3 Invented spelling is not an appropriate means by which to teach writing.
8. 7 Inconsistent enrollment hinders a formal writing program from being attempted.

APPENDIX B

WRITING SURVEY FOR GRADES K-2

INDIVIDUAL VIEWS AND CLASSROOM PRACTICES

Writing Survey Grades K-2
Individual Views and Classroom Practices

This survey relates to individual views and classroom practices concerning writing. Please answer by circling or checking the response which most likely reflects your situation.

Yes 5 No 17 1. Do you write? (stories, articles, poetry)
Yes 10 No 11 2. Do you enjoy writing?
Yes 3 No 19 3. Have you started a formal writing program this year? (other than writing mechanics)
Yes 4 No 18 4. Do you think correct punctuation and spelling should be expected in writing stories for your grade level.
Yes 0 No 22 5. Have you ever published any writing?
Yes 5 No 17 6. Do you use dictation as a method of writing instruction?
Yes 0 No 22 7. Do you use a home writing plan with your class?
Yes 18 No 4 8. Do you use drawing as a method of writing instruction?
Yes 18 No 4 9. Is writing introduced as a whole class activity or for special projects?
Yes 1 No 21 10. Is writing introduced as an individual experience?
Yes 2 No 20 11. Do children exchange what they have written with other classes?
Yes 9 No 13 12. Do children share what they have written with children in their own classroom?
Yes 10 No 12 13. Do children get ideas and help from peers?
Yes 9 No 13 14. Do children see the teacher writing?
Yes 2 No 20 15. Do children select their own topic?
Yes 4 No 18 16. Do children follow teacher suggestion for topic selection?
Yes 1 No 21 17. Are stories published when possible?
Yes 12 No 10 18. Do children draw daily?
Yes 6 No 14 19. Do children write daily?
Yes 2 No 20 20. Do children share responsibility for writing?
Yes 2 No 20 21. Is there a designated writing corner in your room?
Yes 14 No 8 22. Do children listen to folk stories, fairy tales or myths more than once or twice a week?
Yes 19 No 3 23. Do children participate in show and tell?
Frequency: Daily 0 Weekly 6 Other 12
Yes 18 No 4 24. Are children's stories displayed:
Frequency: Daily 0 Weekly 8 Other 10

Thank you. If you are interested in using process writing with your children, please sign this survey.

APPENDIX C

"WRITING" BY A TWO YEAR OLD

"Writing" by a two year old, 1988.

The two illustrations of writing show the power of words in the life of a child as young as A.J. Many pictures had been drawn similar to the one below titled "Button" by the child. The darker, more intense drawing on the left was titled "Sink-hole". This drawing reflected the child's emotional reaction to the inclusion of a new baby brother.

SINKHOLE

"Sinkhole. Put baby in. Here. Right here".

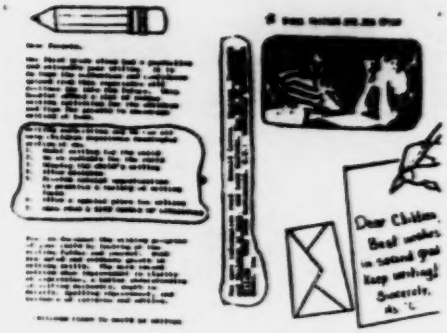
BUTTON

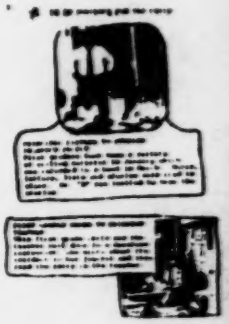
"This button. See"?

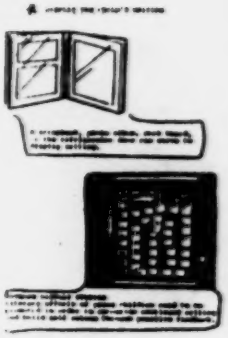
APPENDIX D

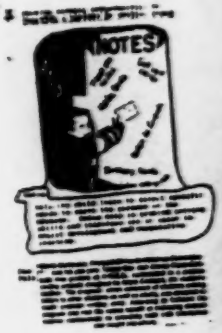
EARLY CHILDHOOD WRITING 1990

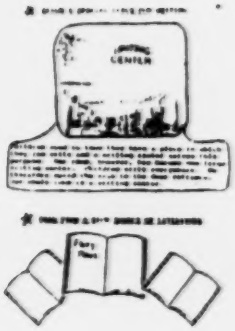
Early Childhood Writing 1990

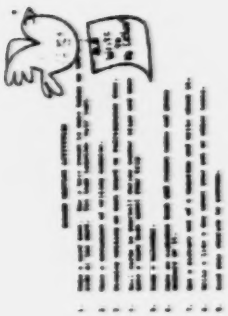












APPENDIX E

HOME WRITING PROJECT LETTER TO PARENTS

Home Writing Project Letter To Parents

January 8, 1990
Home Writing Project
Teacher: _____

Dear Parents,

The children in our room will be given the opportunity to extend literacy experiences through a writing project at home. This activity includes a stuffed animal which will go home with the children for one night. The children will write in a journal about the experiences they have with the stuffed animal during the visit. The journal entries will be read each time the animal returns to school. This writing project will help the children develop confidence as writers.

In order for this writing project to be successful for all the children in our room, it is important that the schedule for the visits be followed exactly. Children will be assigned a date to take the animal home once permission slips are returned. It is vital that both the stuffed animal and the journal be returned the next day because another child will be scheduled to take the stuffed animal home.

Please assist your child with dictation in the journal, if necessary, and any other help needed with writing the journal entries.

We have a large map of Hardee county on display. The travels of the stuffed animal will be recorded on the map. It would be helpful if you would spell the name of your street, etc. and where the animal travels so we can mark the area on the map.

The children are very excited about this writing project. You are welcome to come see the travels of the animal on the map as the children continue this writing experience.

Please fill out and sign the attached permission slip if you want your child to participate in this home writing activity.

The stuffed animal your child will be taking home for an overnight visit is a _____.

Thank you.

This writing project is a component in a process writing program developed by Gayal Cathcart in conjunction with earning an Ed. D. in Early and Middle Childhood.

APPENDIX F

HOME WRITING PROJECT PERMISSION FORM

Home Writing Project Permission Form

January 3, 1990
Home Writing Project

Permission Form

I give permission for my child _____
to participate in the home writing project by taking Ramble the Florida Raccoon home and writing about the experience in the journal. I realize the raccoon and journal must be returned the following day.
My street address is _____.
Phone number _____.

Parent/Guardian signature _____.

You will be notified in writing in advance of the visit.
Have fun!

Thank you,

Gayal Cathcart
GC

APPENDIX G

FIRST GRADE LETTER TO BUS DRIVER

First Grade Letter To Bus Driver

Dear Mrs. Lowe,

Thank you for getting
Ramble Raccoon back home.
"Heor She" is an importan+
animal in our writing journal.

Tyrone
Vin-hit
Kristy
Jerod
Brian
Jeffrey
Ginger
Tammy
Jamie
Miranda
Stefanie
Gabriel
Nicole
Jessica
Launa

Eric
Darry
Joshua

Ms. Cathcart

APPENDIX H

"HOLIDAY WRITERS" NEWS CLIP

"Holiday Writers" News Clip

Page 4-C The Herald-Advocate January 11, 1990

Holiday Writers Share Journals

Children in Ms. Cathcart's first grade class celebrated 1990 by reading journals they had written during their two-week holiday vacation. Seven children participated in this voluntary writing activity by recording daily events in a writing booklet. After reading their journal entries, the group was given New Year hats, noise makers, and chocolate cake to celebrate the beginning of 1990, a year hopefully to be filled with many more positive experiences in writing. The holiday journal is one of the activities included in a home writing program designed by Ms. Cathcart to provide children with extended literacy experiences in real life situations. Seated from left are Eric Torres, Kristy Godwin and Ashley Gross. Standing from left are Joshua Gause, Miranda Beeks, Heather Morgan, Jamis Hensley and Ms. Cathcart.

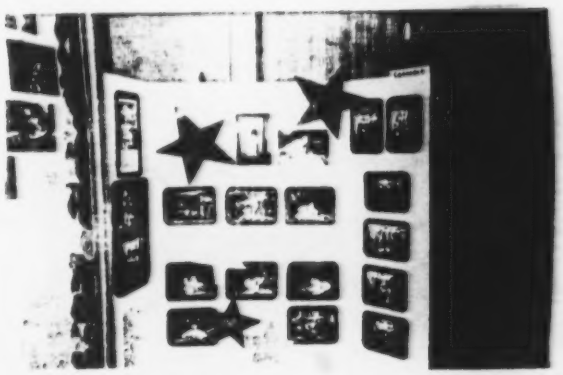
APPENDIX I

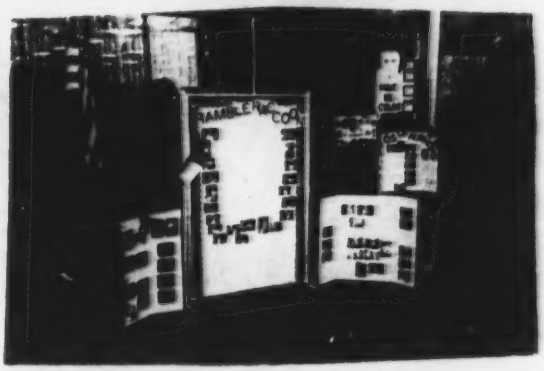
WRITING DISPLAY ON STAGE

P.T.O. SCIENCE FAIR

Writing Display on Stage-P.T.O. Science Fair

You are invited to visit the process writing exhibition on the stage. Displays from the writing/drawing lab, writer's exchange, and home writing component illustrate the varying degrees of writing development. This project is by Ms. Gayal Cathcart.





APPENDIX J

PEN PALS NEWS CLIP

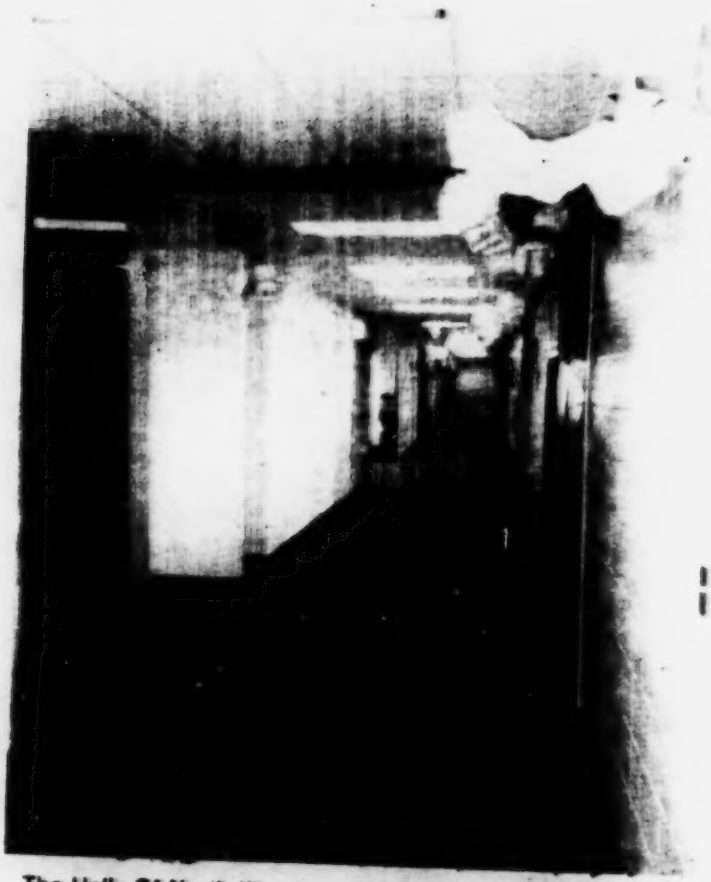
Pen Pals News Clip

...David Dorastanti, Principal Of North W... ...Elementary ...And his pen pals, Tyrone Lee, and Jessica Richardson, both first graders at N.W.E.S., participated in a process writing project designed by Gayle Cathcart, the student's teacher. The program, which consisted of students writing letters to other students as well as adults, was designed to teach practical writing skills. According to Cathcart the program also had the added benefit of improving student-teacher relationships by providing both with information and insight into others.

APPENDIX K

STORY CHAIN NEWS CLIP

Story Chain News Clip



The Halls Of North W: · Elementary School Are Filled . . . With the signs of up and coming writers. The most notable sign is a "story chain," a paper chain consisting of close to 500 stories written by first and second graders. The story chain is just one writing program initiated by Gayal Cathcart. The program has opened the students' eyes to the marvel of writing, and if the 450-foot chain is any example of what is to come, the writing market might want to keep an eye on these blossoming authors.

APPENDIX L

"ART WORKS '89" NEWS CLLIP

"Art Works '89" News Clip

Page 6-A The Herald-Advocate March 30, 1989

Artistically Talented Youngsters Completed A Ten-Week Art Class

Seven students at North W[illegible] Elementary School just completed a 10-week art class designed for [illegible] talented youngsters. Art Works '89 was developed and implemented by first grade teacher, Gayal Cathcart, in conjunction with post graduate courses related to earning a Doctorate in Early and Middle Childhood Education.

Under the direction of art teacher, Sue Harvey, the class met twice a week in art lab where talents and imaginations were allowed to flourish. The children drew from various topics such as water scenes, animals, cartoons, fantasy, structures, and a live model. The productions were displayed weekly on a centrally located bulletin board and included each child's own description of the drawing.

Pictures drawn by the six first grade children and one kindergarten child were seen on stage at the N.W.R.S. Science Fair and at the Volunteer Appreciation Day Presentation in the school library. The children had their own art festival on March 21 and 22. The entire collection of drawings produced during the program was seen by hundreds of children, along with teachers, school personnel, parents, administrators, art teachers from neighboring schools, and other invited patrons of the arts. As one visitor wrote, it was "Awesome." A photo album consisting of Art Works '89 activities was presented to the library.

Howard Solomon, artist and creator of Solomon's Castle, met the young artists on a recent field trip to this well-known attraction and encouraged the children to produce a collective picture which he would display in the castle. This picture is now being prepared.

Children were nominated for the program based on observable characteristics of originality, openness, elaboration, motivation, interest, self-expression, and production samples. These qualities corresponded with successful identification methods used throughout the United States to locate children with exceptional drawing talent.

Solomon's Castle Displays N.W.E.S. Drawings

Howard Solomon, Hardee County's internationally know sculptor, is presently displaying the drawings of some very young artists in his shiny castle. Solomon met the group when they toured the castle last year and offered to display a collective sample of their work.

The talented youngsters were participants in "Art Works '89," an art program developed by Gayal Cathcart to provide artistically talented children the opportunity to draw and have their craft displayed.

APPENDIX M

WRITING/DRAWING LAB

LETTER TO PARENTS

Writing/Drawing Lab Letter To Parents

January 3, 1990
Process Writing Program

Dear Parents,

Last year it was my pleasure to develop "Art Works '89" which was a drawing lab for artistically talented children. This year, I am implementing a process writing program which includes writing centers, a Writer's Exchange program, a Home Writing program, and classroom writing.

I am including a Writing/Drawing component which will give artistic children time to write stories about their drawings. The lab will meet in the art room every Friday afternoon. Children who show extraordinary drawing abilities and are highly motivated to draw will be invited to participate. The lab differs slightly from the art lab last year in that the focus is on writing rather than drawing. The group will be unique because it will be composed of "artists" who also write.

I will receive a list of possible students from the art teacher and will notify the teachers of the children that this opportunity is available. Please realize that the classroom teacher will be a determining factor in whether or not the child is allowed to leave classroom activities in order to attend the lab.

A large bulletin board in the library will be used for the illustrations and stories. You are invited to look for them when you visit the school.

Enclosed is a permission slip you will need to sign if you want your child to participate in the Writing/ Drawing lab. The form may be returned to the art teacher or given to me.

I am delighted to be able to offer this fantastic opportunity to our children who are such capable artists.

Thank you,

Gayal Cathcart

APPENDIX N

WRITING/DRAWING LAB PERMISSION FORM

Writing/Drawing Lab Permission Form

January 3, 1990
Writing/Drawing Lab

Permission Form

I give permission for my child _____
to participate in the Writing/Drawing Lab which will be held in the art room every Friday afternoon. I realize going to the lab is contingent upon permission from the classroom teacher to miss activities in the room.

Parent/Guardian signature_____
Phone number_____

Please return this form to Gayal Cathcart.
Thank you,

GC

APPENDIX O

MID EVALUATION OF WRITING CENTERS

INSERVICE

Mid Evaluation of Writing Centers-Inservice
Open Ended Questioins

Please respond briefly to the following.

1. Describe difficulties, if any, that you may be having establishing a writing center in your room.

2. Do you want additional inservice at this time?

3. Are the children in your class responding enthusiastically to the writing activities?

4. Is the writing center fitting in well with the other subject areas you are teaching?

5. How may I assist you in maintaining the writing center?

APPENDIX P

MID EVALUATION OF WRITING CENTERS

Mid Evaluation of Writing Centers

Please respond with one check as to how you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. 6 respondents

1. Children select their own topic in our writing center.

(4)	( )	(2)	( )	( )
strongly agree				strongly disagree

2. A specific area is defined as the writing center.

(4)	( )	(2)	( )	( )
strongly agree				strongly disagree

3. Children are encouraged to use invented spelling.

(6)	( )	( )	( )	( )
strongly agree				strongly disagree

4. Children write daily.

(2)	( )	(3)	(1)	( )
strongly agree				strongly disagree

5. The writings are published (read to peers, bulletin board)

(3)	( )	(2)	(1)	( )
strongly agree				strongly disagree

6. I consider writing centers an important part of the curriculum.

(5)	( )	(1)	( )	( )
strongly agree				strongly disagree

7. Comments.

APPENDIX Q

EVALUATION OF WRITER'S EXCHANGE AND CLASSROOM WRITING CENTER

Evaluation of Writer's Exchange
and Classroom Writing Center

Responses
9 First gr. teache
4 second gr. teacl
1 art teacher
1 librarian

Evaluation of Writer's Exchange
and Classroom Writing Center
Closed item checklist with multiple selections
Concerning program effectiveness

PLEASE CHECK ALL RESPONSES WHICH APPLY

1. The following observations were noted after participation in a classroom writing center.
   - 11 children are more aware of story sequencing after practice in story writing.
   - 13 sentence structure improved.
   - 14 children are less inhibited toward writing attempts.
   - 14 enthusiasm toward writing increased.
   - 12 willingness to express ideas verbally more frequently.
   - 9 writing increased in other areas (for communication, to express feelings, to relay facts).
   - 8 parents comment over writing increase at home.
   - 15 noticeable increase of writing within the school.
   - 12 Expansion of vocabulary (with use of temporary spelling).
   - 13 increase in self-esteem (evidenced by pride in story, willing to read story to others).
   - 13 more attention paid to writing in general such as the stories of other children or writing in other academic areas.
   - 13 teachers sharing ideas about writing.
   - 8 public interest in writing increased.

2. What could this school do to increase writing activities?
   - 9 library could become a source of writing research and suggestions for teachers.
   - 12 increase community involvement (displays of writing in stores, etc.).
   - 12 Writing inservice for teachers.
   - 9 publish a writing newsletter for school and community
   - 15 teachers share successful writing activities.

3. Which of the following did your class enjoy most? (if applicable).
   - 4 journal writing (taking stuffed animal home).
   - 9 stories in room.
   - 1 pen pals

4. Please comment as to writing and how you could best be served in developing your own writing curriculum.

Thank you for taking time to fill out this evaluation.

APPENDIX R

MID EVALUATION OF HOME WRITING PROGRAM

Mid Evaluation of Home Writing Program
Likert Scale Closed Item Questionnaire

Please respond to the following statements by circling the number on the scale which shows the extent to which you agree or disagree.

1. I have noticed an increase in writing since the home writing activities began.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
strongly agree				strongly disagree

2. I would like for the home writing program to continue.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
strongly agree				strongly disagree

3. I would benefit from a parent handbook explaining how writing can be encouraged at home.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
strongly agree				strongly disagree

4. My child enjoyed bringing Ramble the Raccoon home and would like to repeat the experience.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
strongly agree				strongly disagree

5. My child shows an interest in having a writing center or area for writing at home.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
strongly agree				strongly disagree

Please answer yes or no to the following questions.

1. I would like to be provided with materials for my child to use for writing this summer.
   Yes_____ No_____

2. I would be willing to mail in a survey similar to this one this summer (self-addressed stamped envelope will be provided).
   Yes_____ No

APPENDIX S

EVALUATION OF HOME WRITING PROGRAM

Evaluation of Home Writing Program

Closed item checklist with multiple selections Concerning program effectiveness

PLEASE CHECK ALL ITEMS WHICH APPLY AND RETURN THE SURVEY IN THE STAMPED SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE PROVIDED

1. _____The handbook taken home at the end of the school year was helpful in explaining writing and temporary spelling.

2. _____My child likes the following writing activities:
   - _____note writing
   - _____letter writing
   - _____journal writing
   - _____original stories
   - _____illustrations of stories

3. _____My child is using the summer writing materials.

4. _____My child has gained confidence in writing during first grade.

5. Please comment about the writing program.

Thank you for taking time to fill our this evaluation.
Happy Writing!

APPENDIX T

MID EVALUATION OF WRITER'S EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Mid Evaluation of Writer's Exchange Program

Closed item checklist with multiple selections
Concerning program effectiveness

Please select all responses in each section which apply.

1. The children in my class who participated were pleased with:
   - 5 reading their original stories to another class.
   - 6 reading their original stories to their peers.
   - 4 sitting in the author's chair.
   - 4 having their photos taken and displayed.
   - 5 having their writing displayed.

2. Interest in writing has been evidenced by the following behavior:
   - 3 asking to write frequently.
   - 3 talking about writing with others.
   - 4 comments about having their publications in hall.
   - 4 asking to read stories to others.
   - 4 writing independently without outside motivation.
   - 5 increase in number of stories, etc. written.

3. Publication by reading original stories and displaying them has:
   - 4 increased my own enthusiasm about classroom writing.
   - 6 been a meaningful experience for the children.
   - 6 helped in the recognition of writing development of young children.
   - 5 given children confidence and pride in writing.

4. Problems with the Writer's Exchange Program have centered around:
   - 2 time involved in writing
   - 2 scheduling to read to other classes
   - 1 maintaining interest of children to write.
   - 1 assisting children with editing in order to publish.

5. I would like to see this program:
   - 0 increase scheduling to include additional classes.
   - 3 stay the same pace.
   - 0 discontinue.
   - 2 include people in community as audience.
   - 3 include non instructional personnel in audience.
   - 1 expand bulletin board area for more displays.

6. Comments:

APPENDIX U

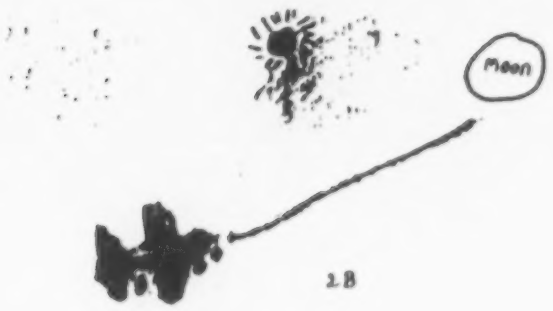
WRITING EXCHANGE PICTURES

Writing Exchange Pictures

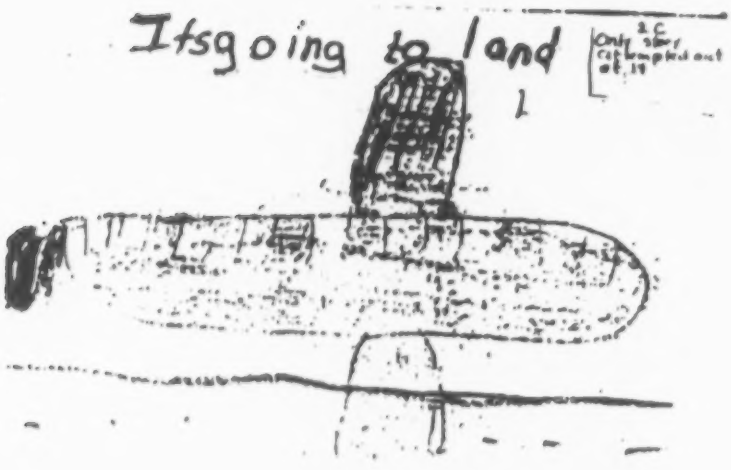
APPENDIX V

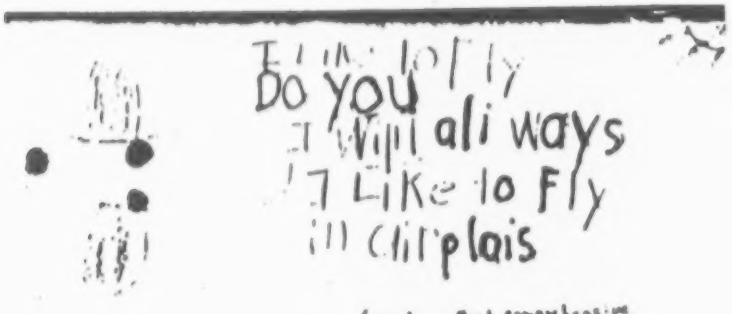
"PLANE" STORIES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

"Plane" Stories and Illustrations



2.B





APPENDIX W

"PLANE" STORIES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

RISK TAKERS

"Plane" Stories and Illustrations
Risk Takers

Last Christmas I went to visit my Grandma because I lived there. In a plane we first went to England first then we went to Zimbabwe and that's when I used to live.
England
Zimbabwe
I used to live.
N
2D
This plane is a war plane.
World War One Airplane
1D
One day I went flying and a wing came off then the other. I crashed but luckily I am alright.
Your friend,
The White Cliffs of Dover flash beneath him.
1D
This sprise shuder it Landing

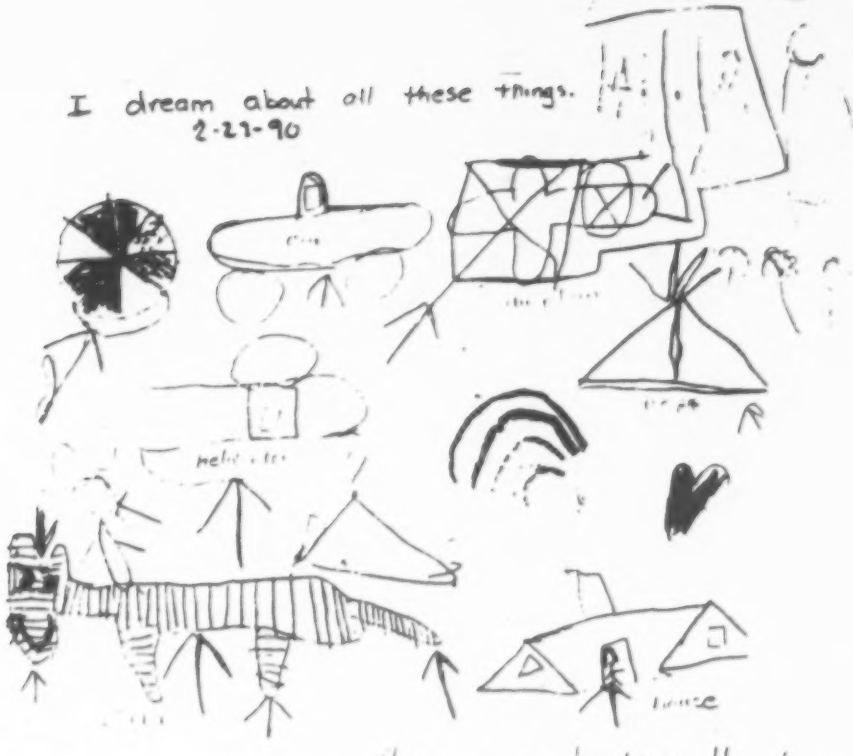
APPENDIX X

KINDERGARTEN PREWRITING

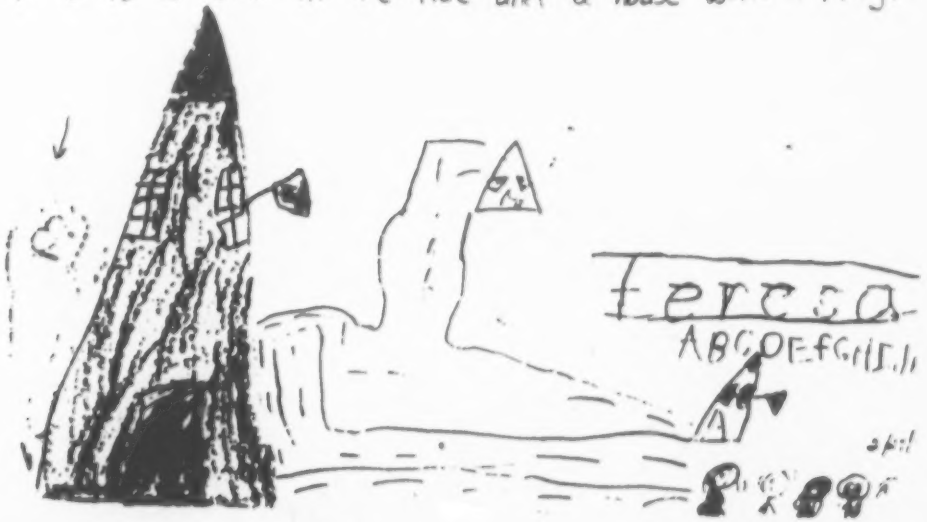
Kindergarten Prewriting

2-27-90

this is a fat man. He likes to eat everything in his house.



I dream about all these things.
2-27-90



APPENDIX Y

FIRST GRADE ILLUSTRATIONS

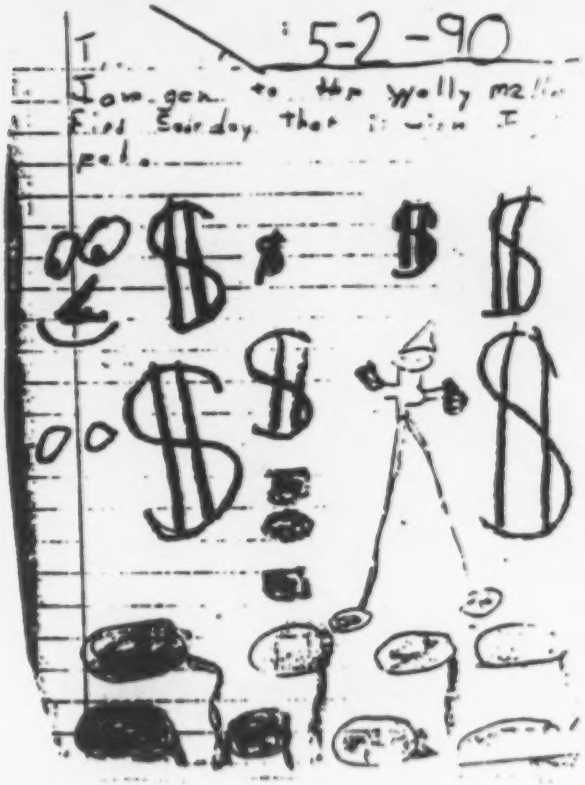
First Grade Illustrations

5-17-90
I was not heye I yestr day becus I was Viale sick I had the Flou.

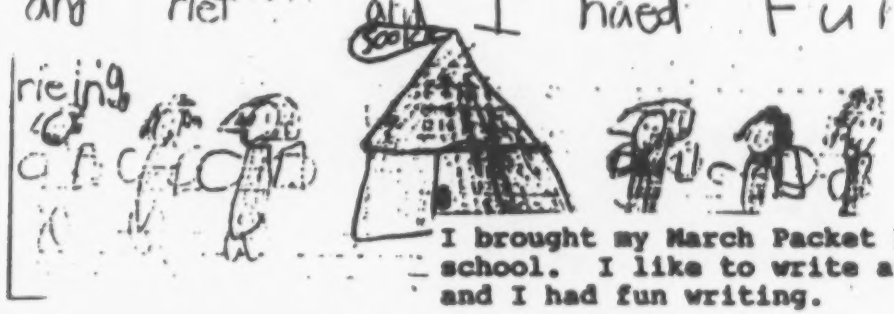
my thate hrs. Mrs. Cathcart.

I was not here yesterday because I was sick. I had the flue. My throat hurts.

I am going to the watermellon field Saturday. That is when I get paid.



3-22-90 I Brot my MARCH PACKET Brack to Sackl I Like to riet and riet and I haed Fun



I brought my March Packet back to school. I like to write and write and I had fun writing.

APPENDIX Z

FIRST GRADE WRITING

First Grade Writing

11- - 89

[illegible] mi dog

I saw my dog.

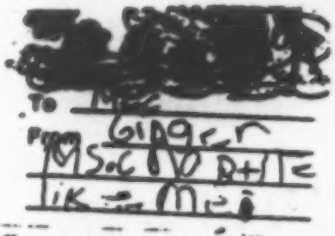
My dog died and I cried and and cried and his name was Lucky. He had a heart attack.

[illegible] 2-27-90

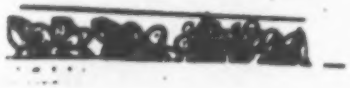
I got a me a new dog and it is a pit bull.

my dog didi and I cri d and cri
d he name was Lucye he had
hrt a tack.

I got me a new
and it is a pit bull.

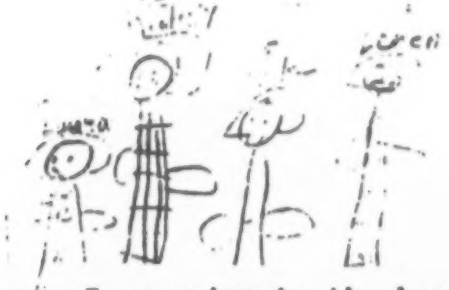


Ms. "C", Nobody likes me.



4-27-90

I am going to the boat [illegible] and [illegible] today.



I am going to the boat races tomorrow and me and Loren we are going to be a walker today.

5-10-90

When I grow up I will be a teacher like Ms. "C". I am happy Ms. "C".